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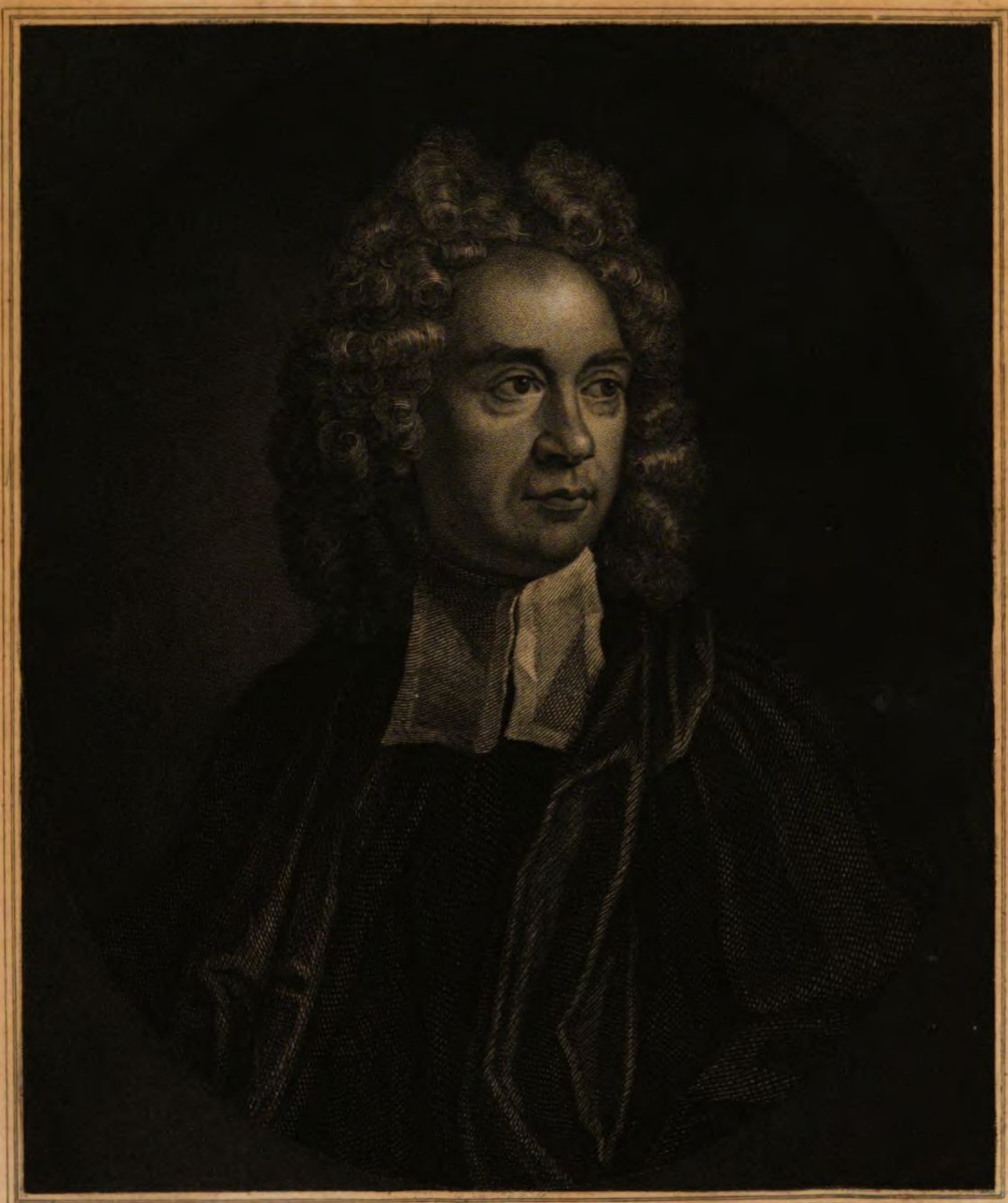
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*Reverend T.G. Ackland, D.D.*  
*With the Author's* <sup>THE</sup> *best respects.*  
**L I F E**

OF

**RICHARD BENTLEY, D.D.**

MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE,

AND REGIUS PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE :

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF HIS WRITINGS,

AND

ANECDOTES OF MANY DISTINGUISHED CHARACTERS

DURING THE

*PERIOD IN WHICH HE FLOURISHED.*

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BY

**JAMES HENRY MONK, D.D.**

LORD BISHOP OF GLOUCESTER.

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*SECOND EDITION, REVISED & CORRECTED.*

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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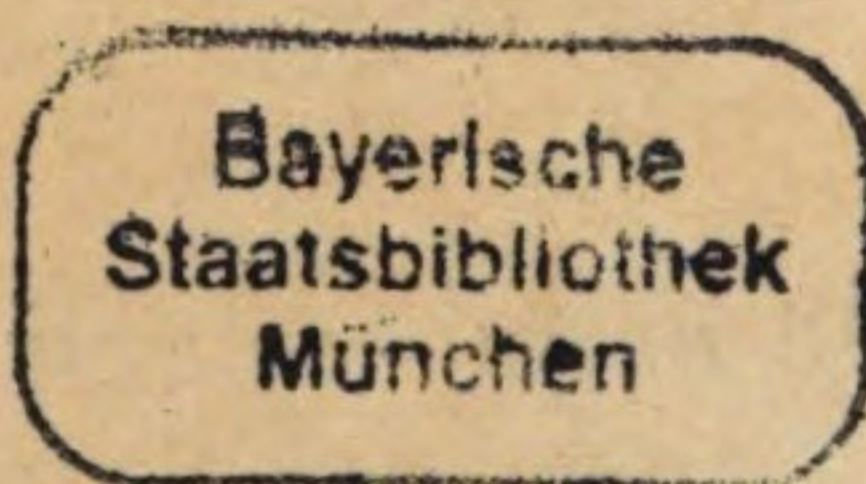
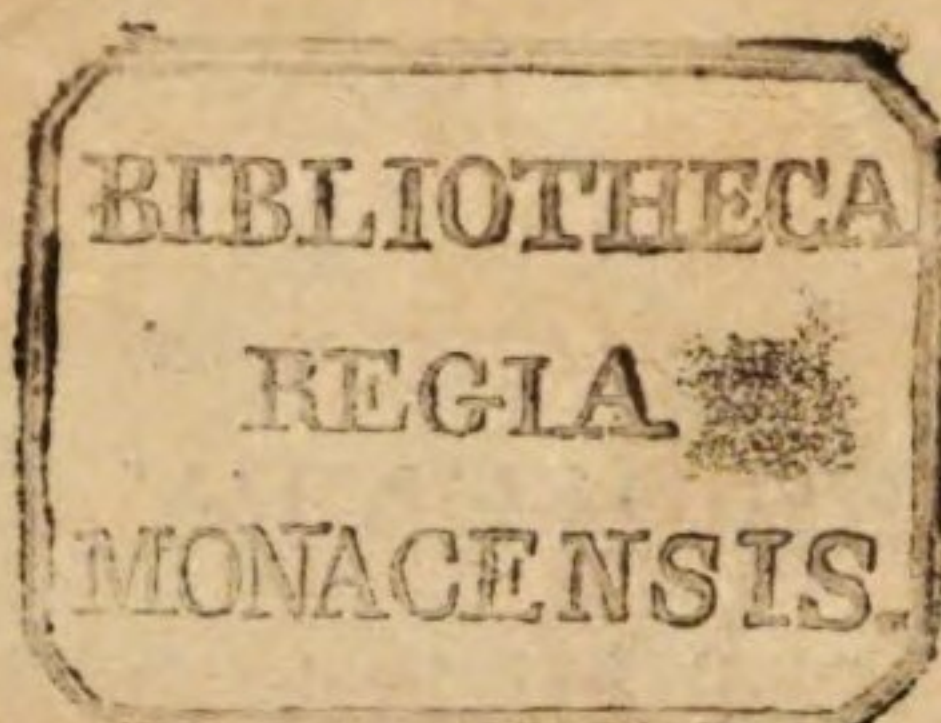
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TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND

CHARLES-JAMES,

LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

---

MY LORD,

THERE are several reasons which induce me to take the liberty of prefixing your name to this publication. In the first place, there is no one to whom an account of the life and writings of a distinguished scholar can be inscribed with more propriety than to your Lordship, who have obtained the same rank in literature at the present day as was enjoyed during his life-time by Dr. Bentley. And if, in the perusal of the following Memoirs, any reader should remark, that great learning is not always accompanied by the graces of personal character, the mention of your Lordship's name will remind him that the defect cannot be attributed to the nature of such studies, and that similar excellence in classical pursuits may be made subservient to religious knowledge and the cultivation of all moral and Christian virtues. Again, it is natural that every scholar should express joy at seeing your Lord-



ship's well-merited elevation to the high station which your learning adorns ; and still more, that a churchman should declare his satisfaction at so important a diocese being filled by a Prelate, whose zeal, piety, and virtues peculiarly qualify him for its important functions ; while they, who have had the happiness of observing all the steps of your progress from a curacy to the See of London, and witnessing your exemplary discharge of the duties of each successive station, must feel uncommon delight at seeing their anticipations of your future distinction fulfilled in your Lordship's exaltation to a post in which you possess such extensive means of encouraging similar conduct in others, by the influence of precept and example. Lastly, I cannot forbear seizing the opportunity now afforded me of publicly mentioning the great and constant friendship with which your Lordship has honoured me for more than twenty years, and which I shall always consider as one of the most gratifying distinctions of my life.

I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of respect and attachment,

MY LORD,

Your very faithful and affectionate servant,

J. H. MONK.



## PREFACE.

---

IN submitting to the Public the following Memoirs of Dr. Bentley's life, I wish to explain, as briefly as possible, my views in undertaking this work, and the materials which I have possessed for its execution.

My desire to see a distinct account of this illustrious scholar originated a long time ago, several years, indeed, before the idea occurred to me of becoming his biographer myself. In the course of my classical reading, I had frequently remarked how much the writings of Dr. Bentley were influenced by the circumstances of his personal history. And while resident at Cambridge, in the society of which he had been the Head, I was continually struck with the manner in which the history of both College and University was connected, and sometimes identified, with the singular particulars of his life for above forty years. But all the narratives of his story, which are to be found in print, were taken from the account given in the *Biographia Britannica*: although that article appeared in 1748, within six years after Dr. Bentley's death, the writer, who is stated to have been the Rev. Mr. Hinton, had little knowledge



of the principal facts of his life, and sought no opportunities of consulting those who were better informed respecting them: his stock of materials consisted of a few of the numerous pamphlets written on the occasions of the quarrel with the University and the dispute in Trinity College; but the information which he collected from them was not sufficient to give him a distinct idea of those transactions, and his narrative is of course confused and unsatisfactory: all the events of the last twenty years of Dr. Bentley's life are despatched in a few lines, and those few very erroneous.

A second edition of the *Biographia* was published by Kippis about thirty years after the first; but the article upon Bentley was reprinted with almost all its mistakes: certain additions, indeed, were appended to it, the greater part of which, coming from a very partial quarter, were not calculated to give a more correct view of the life or character of this distinguished personage. Several attempts have been subsequently made, in different periodical works and compilations, to digest that confused heap of materials into a regular shape; some of those articles, having been written by scholars, exhibit a much more correct view of Bentley's publications and literary merits; but for his personal history, they have done little more than retail the narrative of Mr. Hinton, with all its errors and misconceptions: in the meantime, it has been generally remarked, that a satisfactory Memoir of Bentley's life was a *desideratum* in English literature.



Perceiving that it was impracticable for any one to give a faithful or distinct account of his career, without a full examination of the records, registers, and correspondence found in the archives of the University, and of Trinity College, I long wished that some person who had leisure for such a work, and whose station gave him access to those depositories, would elucidate this curious period of academical history : and it was only from despair of seeing the task accomplished by other hands, that I resolved to undertake it myself.

My object in this work may be considered threefold : first, to give a full and impartial view of Bentley's life and character ; secondly, a sketch of literary history during the period in which he flourished ; and, thirdly, an account of what is worthy of notice in the annals of the College and University, for the first forty years of the eighteenth century. It happens that these three subjects naturally combine and blend themselves into the same narrative.

In the detail of events, it has been my constant study to represent every transaction in its true colours, and to give a candid and unbiassed view of the conduct of every person concerned. Having spared no pains in investigating the truth, by reference to authentic documents, and by comparison of opposite accounts from different parties, I am in hopes that I have generally succeeded in giving a faithful representation of the facts : but while I endeavour to do justice to Dr. Bentley, it is frequently necessary to exhibit his conduct in an unfavourable light, and such



as reflects no credit upon his character, station, or profession. In so doing I shall of course expose myself to the censure of persons, who condemn all attempts to record the errors and frailties of illustrious characters, and would wish biography to be employed upon those subjects only which can be proposed as models for imitation. Anticipating objections of this nature, I may as well make my reply to them at once. In the first place, I cannot acknowledge the justice or expediency of confining biography within the limits just mentioned; since I deem the discovery of truth paramount to all other considerations, and think that an important and useful moral may be drawn from the failings of persons gifted with high intellectual endowments. But waiving this question, it is right to state, that my publication is not the means of first bringing to light the defects in Dr. Bentley's character. The numerous pamphlets which treat of his behaviour at different periods of his life, are in greater request than any other tracts that I am acquainted with: many of these pieces, particularly the effusions of Conyers Middleton, which have been reprinted among his works, represent his conduct in the worst and most flagrant colours, and abound with exaggerations and misstatements produced by temporary excitement and virulent hostility. The present narrative, while it disguises nothing, will be the means of vindicating Bentley from unjust aspersions, and of giving a distinct and fair view of his conduct, instead of representations distorted and overcharged by personal animosity.

Soon after I had formed the design of this work,



two unexpected and important sources of information presented themselves. In the first place, a collection of Bentley's correspondence with the greatest scholars of his time, for about half a century, was discovered in Trinity Lodge, at the death of the late Master, along with several other papers of great importance in his history. Secondly, the manuscripts of Dr. Colbatch and others of Bentley's prosecutors, having been carefully preserved by two or three successive possessors, at length fell into the hands of an attorney at Cambridge, and on his death were sold by his son along with his books to a small second-hand book-shop: at that moment, when in the last stage of its journey to the grocer's or pastry-cook's, the whole collection was accidentally seen and rescued from its fate by two members of Trinity College. This large mass of papers comprehends the correspondence of Colbatch with many distinguished characters, of which the letters of Conyers Middleton relative to his quarrels with Bentley form an interesting part; and the various controversies which agitated the University of Cambridge and Trinity College for nearly thirty years, are here elucidated by the most satisfactory authorities—the records of different courts, briefs for counsel, and the evidence of witnesses on the opposite sides. Without the last-mentioned documents, it would have been impossible to have given a distinct or connected account of those extraordinary and complicated transactions.

Of my other unpublished sources of information the principal are, the documents, relative both to



business and literature, preserved in the Archives, the Library, and the Master's Lodge of Trinity College, and the registers and public records belonging to the University. I have also examined and gleaned much information from Mr. William Cole's voluminous manuscripts, from the Harleian papers, and other materials in the British Museum; from the collections of Hearne and Gough the antiquaries, and from the Ballard papers in the Bodleian Library at Oxford; a considerable correspondence between Archbishop Wake and Dr. Bentley, preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth: and a great variety of letters and other original documents, which have been communicated to me by different private hands. Next to the first-named great collections of original papers, I have derived the most assistance from three manuscript journals kept by Dr. Colbatch, Dr. Rud, and Mr. Attwood, who detailed from day to day with great exactness events in which Dr. Bentley was concerned during several interesting periods of his life.

I have of course been careful to investigate and draw from the works of Bentley and his contemporaries, as well as from every subsequent publication, whatever authentic anecdotes or hints I could discover which might be of use in his biography. In the latter class of publications, I feel that it is a just tribute to acknowledge the frequent assistance which I have found in Mr. Nichols's volumes of *Literary Anecdotes* and *Illustrations of Literature*. I have examined every one of the numerous pamphlets re-



lative to Bentley's literary works and his personal controversies which are any where recorded to have appeared, besides several others which have escaped the notice of bibliographers and collectors.

In taking this work in hand, I had little suspicion of its extent, or the time required for its completion : of the labour which it has cost me, I shall say nothing ; since this can only be appreciated by such readers as may have employed themselves in similar undertakings : from them I shall probably have credit for an endeavour to give a faithful representation of incidents long past ; and they, perhaps, will be most disposed to treat with indulgence the faults and imperfections of the book.

My special acknowledgments are due to the Master and Fellows of Trinity College, for their kindness and confidence shown in the unreserved communication of all the documents in their possession ; to Mr. WILLIAM HUSTLER, the Registry, for greatly facilitating my researches in the Archives of the University ; to the REV. DR. BLISS, and the gentlemen who have the care of the Bodleian Library, for their kind assistance in furthering my enquiries in that noble repository ; and to the Rev. DR. D'O'LY, Librarian of the Archbishop of Canterbury, for similar aid in the Manuscript Library of Lambeth Palace.

To many gentlemen I am indebted for memoranda, original letters, and other documents which have contributed to this narrative ; of whom I would par-



ticularly mention Mr. JOHN BLAYDS, of Oulton, for information respecting Bentley's family and early years; the Very Rev. DR. WOOD, Dean of Ely, for the particulars of him while a member of St. John's College; to the Rev. DR. TOURNAY, Warden of Wadham College, for notices respecting his residence at Oxford; to Mr. UPCOTT, Librarian of the London Institution, for copies of a valuable correspondence of Bentley with his distinguished friend Evelyn; to the Rev. DR. BURNEY, for the communication of many detached papers respecting Bentley, collected by his learned father; to Mr. JAMES RIMINGTON, for a large mass of papers belonging to Dr. Colbatch; and to the late MR. BENTLEY WARREN, for the communication of many interesting particulars which he had learned from his uncle, Dr. Richard Bentley, of Nailstone in Leicestershire, the nephew and executor of our hero. There are many other persons, who have kindly supplied me with detached materials, to whom my obligations are expressed in the notes. If I have in any instance neglected to make this acknowledgment, I trust that the omission will be attributed to oversight and accident.

One more remark is necessary, before this volume leaves my hands. As I have been obliged to relate the particulars of several sharp controversies and stormy disputes, it has happened that the conduct of some personages concerned is represented in unfavourable colours. In so doing I have had no object in view except the establishment of truth; and as more than a century has now passed away



since the transactions alluded to took place, I trust that the parties may be considered as being fairly the subjects of history. Should there, however, be any part of my book which occasions pain or displeasure to the descendants of persons who figure in the narrative, I can only say that I shall be sincerely concerned at such a result, as being entirely contrary both to my feelings and intentions.

*Deanery, Peterborough,*

*April, 1830.*







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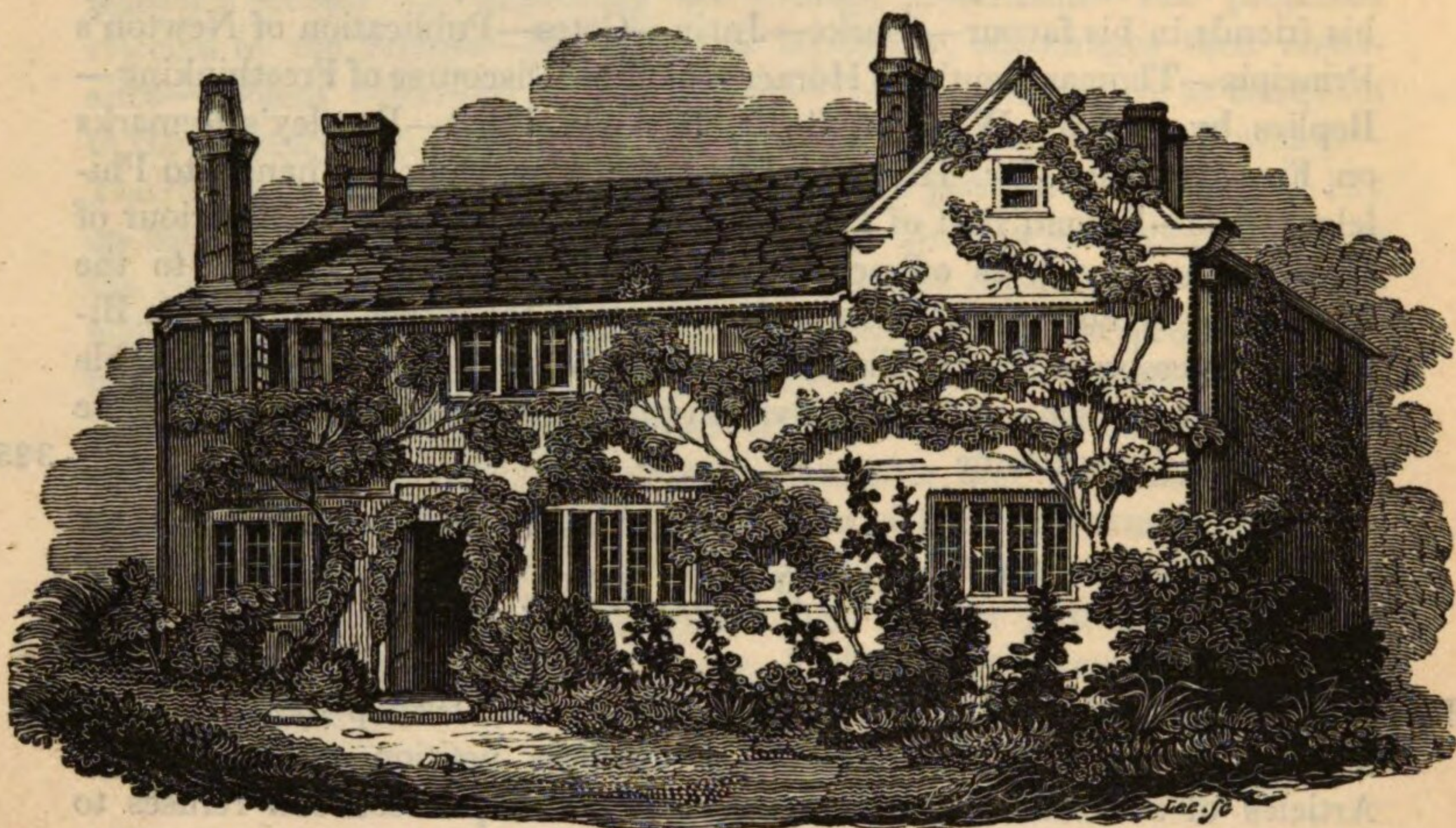
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THE HOUSE IN WHICH BENTLEY WAS BORN.



# LIFE

OF

## RICHARD BENTLEY, D.D.

### CHAPTER I.

*Bentley's origin—Family—Grandfather, Richard Willie—Education in childhood—Wakefield School—His instructors—His father's death—His grandfather's bequest—Sent to St. John's College, Cambridge—College studies—Bentley's verses—Mathematical pursuits—Newton's lectures—Bentley's contemporaries—Richard Johnson—William Wotton, a juvenile prodigy—Degree of B.A.—Fellowship at St. John's College—Bentley master of Spalding School—Tutor to the son of Dr. Stillingfleet—His Hebrew studies—Classical pursuits.*

RICHARD BENTLEY was a native of Oulton in the parish of Rothwell, a village not far from Wakefield, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. In certain biographical narratives which appeared a few years after his death we find him described as a person of very low extraction, 'the son either of a tanner or a blacksmith<sup>1</sup>.' On the other hand, the late Mr. Richard Cumberland, his grandson, not only contradicts this statement, but intimates that he was sprung from a family of rank and consideration, and shows great anxiety to establish this point; as if he deemed it more honourable to his ancestor to have been born of gentle blood, than to have raised himself from

CHAP. I.

Bentley's  
origin.

<sup>1</sup> *Biographia Britannica*, vol. ii. p. 734, first edition, 1748.



CHAP. I. obscurity by the force of genius and merit<sup>2</sup>. But the fact is, that Bentley's progenitors were of that respectable class which has supplied every profession with many of its brightest ornaments, the higher description of English yeomen: they had been settled for some generations at Heptonstall, a village about eight miles from Halifax, where they possessed property, which appears to have suffered in the civil wars between the King and the Parliament<sup>3</sup>. His grandfather, James Bentley, a captain in the Royal army, was taken by the enemy, and died a prisoner in Pontefract Castle; Cumberland adds, that 'his house was plundered, and his estate confiscated.'

Family.

His father, Thomas Bentley, possessed a small estate, probably by inheritance, at Woodlesford, one of the five townships of which the parish of Rothwell consists: indeed, from the occurrence of the name of Bentley in the parish registers in the reign of Elizabeth, I am led to suppose that this had been the original residence of the family. In the year 1661 he married Sarah, daughter of Richard Willie, a stone-mason at Oulton; and the first offspring of their union was the illustrious subject of these memoirs. Bentley was born on the 27th of January, 1661-62, in a house belonging to his grandfather, in compliment to whom he received the name of Richard. Mr.

Grandfather, Richard Willie.

<sup>2</sup> In Kippis's edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, the article upon Bentley received many additions and alterations, which were avowedly from the hand of Cumberland.

<sup>3</sup> The family was very numerous, and spread into several branches. In the register of baptisms in the chapelry of Heptonstall, which consists of four townships, no less than forty-two persons of the name of Bentley are found between the years 1599 and 1660. The Christian names of most frequent occurrence are, Michael, James, and Thomas. For particulars respecting the family at Heptonstall, I am indebted to the obliging enquiries of the Rev. Joseph Charnock, who occupies a house belonging to the family, and some closes adjoining, which in the records of the parish are called 'Bentley's Land.'



Willie appears to have been a person of more consideration than his trade of 'mason' might imply; according to the authority just cited, he too had been a cavalier, and had held a major's commission in the Royal army<sup>4</sup>. This however is certain, that in the education and welfare of his grandson he took a great and effectual interest.

CHAP. I.  
1662.

It is a circumstance not unworthy of record, that the most celebrated scholar of modern times received the first rudiments of his classical education from a female: it was his mother, who is represented to have been a woman of exceedingly good understanding, by whom Bentley was taught the Latin Accidence<sup>5</sup>. He was first sent to a day-school in the neighbouring hamlet of Methley<sup>6</sup>; afterwards to the Grammar School of Wakefield, a seminary of considerable reputation. Of Bentley's school studies and school friendships no particulars have been recorded: by Cumberland we are only told, that 'he went through the school with singular reputation, for his proficiency, as well as for his regularity.' Even the name of the master who had the honour of so illustrious a pupil, has been hitherto unknown. I find that Mr. Jeremiah Boulton was master of Wakefield School until April, 1672, when he obtained the living of Ackworth, and was succeeded by Mr. John Baskerville. Of the latter gentleman, to whom, of course, the principal credit of Bentley's education must belong, I know no more than that he was of Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

Education  
in child-  
hood.

Wakefield  
school.

His instruc-  
tors.

<sup>4</sup> *Biographia Britannica*. It is necessary to observe, that Cumberland is inaccurate in several of the particulars which he gives of Bentley: he is even mistaken in the name of his grandfather, whom he repeatedly calls *Willis*.

<sup>5</sup> *Biographia Britannica*.

<sup>6</sup> This and some other particulars I learnt from Mrs. Hopkins, a lady related to the Bentley family, who died a few years ago at a very advanced age.



CHAP. I. and presided in the school till his death in 1681.  
1672.

Not to name the school or the masters of men illustrious for literature, has been justly called ‘ a kind of historical fraud, by which honest fame is injuriously diminished <sup>7</sup>.’ This remark is peculiarly applicable to cases like the present, where the eminence of the party rests so materially upon classical scholarship, and where the bias of his taste and genius probably received its direction from his early instructors. For the place of his education Bentley testified throughout life the greatest attachment, and extended to persons coming from that seminary his encouragement and patronage. It may here be mentioned, that to this school belongs the singular distinction of having produced two scholars who held the office of Regius Professor of Divinity in their respective Universities at the same time. John Potter, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, who filled the theological chair at Oxford, when Bentley was chosen to the same post at Cambridge, was sent from Wakefield to University College.

His father's  
 death, April  
 1675.

At the time of Bentley's birth, his father was considerably advanced in life, while his mother's age was only nineteen. They had four children younger than himself, of whom only two, Ann and Joseph, survived their infancy. When he was thirteen years old, his father died, leaving his property at Woodlesford to his eldest son James, the offspring, as it appears, of a former marriage. Richard was committed to the care of his grandfather Willie, who determined upon sending him to the University. This design he put in execution the following year, choosing that early period either on account of the youth's uncommon proficiency, or for the better chance of witnessing

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Samuel Johnson's Life of Addison.



himself the completion of his education. His partiality for his grandson appears in a bequest of some property, consisting of seven acres of land, the house in which Bentley was born, and other buildings; one-third to his daughter, and the remaining two-thirds, with the reversion of the whole, to her eldest son Richard<sup>8</sup>.

CHAP. I.  
1675.

His grandfather's bequest.

Our young scholar was admitted at Cambridge a subsizar of St. John's College, at that time the largest in the University, under the tuition of the Rev. Joseph Johnston; and in the entry of his admission he is stated, either by design or accident, to be a year older than he actually was<sup>9</sup>. The master of the College was Dr. Francis Turner, afterwards Bishop of Ely, and one of the seven prelates who signalized themselves by their resistance to the attempts of James II. against the Church. The University was at this time crowded with students to a degree, of which there has since been hardly any example: at his matriculation, Bentley's name appears the last of twenty-six sizars of St. John's College, who had all commenced their residence in the same term.

May 24,  
1676.

Bentley sent to St. John's College, Cambridge.

July 6,  
1676.

Of Bentley's studies at the University, I am able to communicate little more than what may be inferred from the attainments which he subsequently exhibited. He here, doubtless, laid the foundation of his

College studies.

<sup>8</sup> For particulars relative to the Oulton property, Bentley's family, and other matters connected with the place of his nativity, I am indebted to my friend, John Blayds, esq. who is possessed of the property in question, and has kindly examined and transcribed the different deeds alluded to, as well as the parish registers.

<sup>9</sup> Extract from the Admission Book of St. John's College: "Richardus Bentley de Oulton, filius Thomæ B. defuncti, annos natus 15 et quod excurrit, literis institutus infra Wakefield, admissus est subsizator pro M'ro Johnston tutore et fidejussore ejus, Maii 24, ann. 1676." Bentley's tutor, when he took his degree of B.A. in 1664, spelled his name *Johnson*. The reader of these memoirs will perhaps be struck with the coincidence which associates so many persons of the name of *Johnson* with Bentley's history.



CHAP. I. accurate and extensive knowledge of the classics, and  
 1676. attained that nice perception of their poetical measures, for which he stands unrivalled. Upon the latter point, indeed, where he had scarcely any example to follow, and where he claims the merit of a discoverer, we are told by himself, in his Dissertation on the Metres of Terence, that he had adopted some of his metrical opinions at this early age<sup>10</sup>. The academical prizes which now serve as a stimulus to the genius and exertions of students, and are the means of recording their early merits, had at that time no existence: indeed, the value of this powerful engine of emulation seems not to have been understood until long after the period of which we are writing. But the collision of talent, inevitable in so large a society, could not have failed to operate with full force upon the youthful ardour of such a mind as Bentley's.

Bentley's  
verses.

I am not aware that any of his Latin verses, written at this period, have been preserved: but we have little cause to regret their loss, as he was not endowed with a poetical vein, and it is evident, from his subsequent productions of that kind, that he never acquired facility or elegance in their composition; an accomplishment, indeed, hardly to be expected from a boy who quits school at the age of fourteen. The only specimen which I possess of his college exercises, is an English ode "On the Papists' Conspiracy by Gunpowder," written in stanzas of ten lines: it is principally curious, as showing that a taste still prevailed for the forced conceits and far-fetched quibbles which mark the poetical school of Cowley. The following is a specimen of the style in which he combines his wit and learning:

<sup>10</sup> "Quare ego jam ab adolescentia in omnibus Iambicis præter Tetrametrum Catalecticum, de quo postea dicam, aliam mihi scansionis rationem institui, per διποδίαν scilicet τροχαϊκήν," &c. *De Metris Terentianis*, p. iv.



“ Such *devilish* deeds to *Angli* done !  
Such *black* designs on *Albion* !  
Transmarine fruit : sure 't could not grow  
From soil quite contrary, and people too.  
He that its history doth tell,  
Must not have goose but Harpy's quill ;  
No Heliconian aid must wish,  
But th' iron whip of Nemesis ;  
'Tis that must now make Pegasus to go,  
And scorn St. Peter's church at Rome below.

The Roman Pontiff he calls,

“ For mathematics much renown'd ;  
That fame's his due ; for he hath found  
The point of Archimede, he 'th hurl'd  
Religion upside down, and mov'd the world.”

And he thus compares the operations of the Papists  
with the persecutions of the Christians under Nero :

“ 'Tis true, the Christians they did tear,  
Sewed in the skins of wolf and bear ;  
But now ye butcher all the rest,  
Like wolves in shape of Christians drest.  
We do not wish that you should bear  
Our kings in splendid triumph here,  
Elijah-like, the skies to pass :  
No Phaëthon in Britain was.  
Our sins are not so foul as to require  
The Roman purgatory fire,  
To make the senate-house a pile,  
And senate a burnt off'ring for the isle.”

The studies of the schools consisted of logic, ethics,  
natural philosophy, and the mathematics : the latter  
branch of knowledge, which was destined subse-  
quently to take the lead, and almost to swallow up  
the rest, had then but recently become an object of  
much attention. That Bentley cultivated mathe-

Mathemati-  
cal pursuits.



CHAP. I. 1676. matical science with effect, may be inferred from the close and logical character of his style, as well as from his constantly recommending and patronizing such studies in others. The true system of the universe, and the proper methods of philosophical investigation, had not yet become public by the writings of Newton : but the light of the Newtonian discoveries was partially revealed to Cambridge before the rest of the world, by the lectures of the philosopher himself, delivered in his character of Lucasian Professor. These Bentley had an opportunity of attending ; and that he did not neglect it, I am induced to believe by his selection of the Newtonian discoveries as a prominent subject of his Boyle's Lectures, and his familiarity with the train of reasoning by which they are established.

Newton's  
lectures.

Bentley's  
contempo-  
raries.

Richard  
Johnson.

Among the students of the same year with Bentley, I find some names of no small celebrity: Samuel Garth of St. Peter's College, well known as a physician, a poet, and a philanthropist ; John Dennis of Caius, a name familiar in the literary history of his time, whose acuteness as a critic made him formidable to Addison and Pope. Richard Johnson, of the same college as Bentley, was also his contemporary ; and I conjecture him to be the person afterwards master of Nottingham School, and author of *Grammatical Commentaries*, *Noctes Nottinghamicæ*, and *Aristarchus Anti-Bentleianus*. This identity, which there seems little reason to doubt, may help to account for the personal rancour displayed against Bentley in the latter production ; which is inexplicable but upon the supposition of some previous intercourse. Johnson's spleen might have been the offspring of a feud begun at the University, or of mortification at the neglect of old acquaintance by his more fortunate fellow-col-



legian<sup>11</sup>. Of his contemporaries I am aware of only one with whom Bentley maintained a friendship in after life: this was William Wotton, the able antagonist of Sir W. Temple, in the controversy ‘On ancient and modern Learning.’ As their combined efforts on that occasion have associated together the names of Wotton and Bentley, it is right to take some notice of the former, who, when he entered the University, was a child, and presents the best authenticated instance of a juvenile prodigy that I have ever found upon record<sup>12</sup>. It is certified by the testimony not of one but many persons of sense and learning, that at six years of age he was able to read and translate Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; to which, at seven, he added some knowledge of the Arabic and Syriac. On his admission at Catherine Hall in his tenth year, the master, Dr. Eachard, the antagonist of Hobbes, recorded, ‘*Gulielmus Wotton, infra decem annos, nec Hammondo nec Grotio secundus.*’ His surprising proficiency during his academical career is testified by some of the best scholars of that day, Dr. Paman the Public Orator, Dr. Duport the Dean of Peterborough, and Dr. Lynnet of Trinity College. When he proceeded Bachelor of Arts, he was ac-

CHAP. I.  
1676.

William  
Wotton, a  
juvenile  
prodigy.

<sup>11</sup> Johnson, in his ‘Grammatical Commentaries,’ styles himself M.A. and Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, who gives some account of him in the Memoirs of his own life, says, that ‘he could not find out which University had the honour of his education.’ Bentley’s contemporary, Richard Johnson, is the only graduate of the name, either at Oxford or Cambridge, who could be the Nottingham schoolmaster. He proceeded indeed no further than his degree of B.A. But there have been many instances of persons who, having only taken that first degree, afterwards intimated their academical education by assuming the title of M.A. to which they had no claim; probably from a dislike of the juvenile notion connected with the term ‘Bachelor of Arts.’

<sup>12</sup> I am aware of the prodigies recorded of John Philip Barretier, whose life is given by Dr. Sam. Johnson. See *Johnson’s Works*, vol. xii. p. 149. But the wonderful parts of that narrative rest upon the sole authority of the youth’s father.



CHAP. I.  
1679-80.

quainted with twelve languages; and as there was no precedent for granting that degree to a boy of thirteen, Dr. Humphrey Gower, one of the Caput, thought fit to put upon record a notice of his proficiency in every species of literature, as a justification of the University. These testimonies, after making every abatement for the language of admiration, leave the fact little less than miraculous: and it is right to add, that Wotton maintained in after life a reputation much higher than is generally the case with persons famed for precocious intellect in childhood<sup>13</sup>.

Nov. 4,  
1678.

As Bentley did not enjoy an exhibition from his school, his finances were probably slender; but when he had been above two years at college, he was made scholar on the foundation of Dr. Dowman, there being perhaps no claimant from Pocklington School, for which that endowment is destined: at the expiration of the year he succeeded to one of the Yorkshire scholarships founded by Sir Marmaduke Constable.

Jan. 23,  
1679-80.  
Degree of  
B.A.

After the regular period of residence and study, Bentley commenced Bachelor of Arts, in company with a greater number of students than have ever since taken their degree at the same time, till the last two or three years. On this occasion, so important in an academical life, his name appears sixth in the First Tripos, or list of honours. But a custom existed for the Vice-chancellor and two Proctors severally to nominate one student to a place among the honours, as a compliment; and the names of these honorary 'Senior Optimes' were registered immediately after that of the first man in the year. This practice, though invidious as a distinction, and in-

<sup>13</sup> The numerous and incontrovertible testimonies of the amazing proficiency of Wotton's childhood may be seen in Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iv. p. 253—259.



effectual as an honour, was suffered to continue, until the Senate-house examination had assumed its present form and importance; nor was it totally abolished till within the last forty years. Bentley's place, therefore, corresponded with that of third Wrangler at the present period. It is right, however, to notice, that the disposition of these honours in former days, considered as a criterion of merit, hardly admits of a comparison with that of later times. The care taken in ascertaining the proficiency of the young men was inadequate; and consequently little value seems to have been attached to such distinctions, which we scarcely ever find mentioned before the middle of the last century. The very year in which Bentley graduated, witnessed the first of the improvements that have progressively raised the philosophical system of Cambridge to its present eminence—I mean, the annual appointment of two persons accomplished in scientific knowledge, to preside as Moderators in the Sophs' Schools; a duty previously performed by the Proctors, who from the accidental mode of their nomination, must sometimes have been deficient in the requisite qualifications. Four years afterwards a further improvement was made, by associating these persons with the examiners for degrees<sup>14</sup>.

CHAP. I.  
1679-80.

1680.

1684.

Bentley had now completed his education with such a share of credit as never fails to secure employment and maintenance for a scholar: he was, however, excluded from a fellowship in his college, by that unfortunate provision in the statutes of St. John's, which confined the number of fellows born in each county to two; a restriction not removed till the reign of his present majesty: there being at that time two fellowships held by Yorkshiremen, it followed that he

Fellowships  
at St. John's  
College.

<sup>14</sup> From the Registers of the University.



CHAP. I.  
1681-82.

March,  
1681-82.

Bentley  
Master of  
Spalding  
School.

was not admissible. For the two years succeeding his Bachelor's degree, I am unable to trace any notice or biographical anecdote respecting him: he probably continued to reside at Cambridge, in the further prosecution of his studies. A fellowship, founded by Sir Marmaduke Constable, then becoming vacant, Bentley was a candidate<sup>15</sup>: but as persons in priest's orders are alone eligible to this foundation, and as he wanted four years of the canonical age, his motive in coming forward on this occasion must have been a desire to distinguish himself by his performance in the examination. St. John's College has at all times been laudably noted for attention to the interests of its deserving members; a spirit which was now exhibited in favour of Bentley. The head-mastership of the Grammar School of Spalding in Lincolnshire being vacant, and the nomination having lapsed to the college, he was appointed to that office. The commission of so important a trust to a youth who had just completed his twentieth year, is not only a testimony of his scholarship, but implies an opinion of the steadiness and discretion of his character. As soon as he was of age, he disposed of his interest in the Oulton property to his brother James; and we are told that he devoted the money arising from the sale to the purchase of a collection of books, an article indispensable in his present situation<sup>16</sup>.

The office of a country schoolmaster generally fixes the destiny of its possessor for life, and forces him to be contented with the humble but honourable fame to be acquired in the discharge of its duties. Bentley's lot designed him for a different sphere: he did not preside over the school more than a twelvemonth, too short a period to afford means of estimating his merits

<sup>15</sup> Cumberland, *Biographia Britannica*, vol. ii. p. 242.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.



as an instructor, and scarcely sufficient to place his name upon record in that capacity. Not only were his early biographers ignorant of the fact of his having been master of Spalding School, but during his lifetime it was not generally known : many of his antagonists accuse him of writing in the style of a pedagogue, without seeming to be aware that he had once actually sustained that character <sup>17</sup>.

In the accounts of the school I observe, that before the year 1722 the master had no proper dwelling-house<sup>18</sup>. This deficiency of accommodation at Spalding might have been one reason which induced Bentley to accept the office of domestic tutor to the son of Dr. Edward Stillingfleet, Dean of St. Paul's. Accordingly he bade adieu to Spalding, (where he was succeeded by Mr. Walter Johnson), and became an inmate in the family of that illustrious divine. For this appointment likewise he was indebted to St. John's college, of which the Dean had been a fellow. To a young man of talents and merit, hardly any situation could have been more beneficial : he here enjoyed the use of one of the best private libraries in the world ; was in the habit of conversing with many leading characters in the Church and State, who visited his patron ; and, above all, had the opportunity of profiting by the daily society of the Dean, who was a person of unbounded learning, and who had great insight into the characters and capacities of others ; while his amiable disposition, and the recollection of having himself in early life filled a similar situation in two gentlemen's families, insured his

CHAP. I.  
1682-83.

1682-83.  
Tutor to the  
son of Dr.  
Stillingfleet.

<sup>17</sup> See a letter upon the subject from Mr. J. Rowning to Mr. Wm. Greaves of Fulbourne, given in Nichols' Account of the Spalding Society.—*Literary Anecdotes*, vol. vi. p. 10.

<sup>18</sup> Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. vi. p. 55.



CHAP. I. liberal and considerate treatment of the tutor of his  
 1683. son <sup>19</sup>.

July, 1683.

His Hebrew  
 studies.

Bentley took his degree of Master of Arts at the regular period, after which his connection with the University of Cambridge ceased for some years ; the Dean, in whose family he lived, being Rector of St. Andrew's Holborn, resided principally in London. Here he prosecuted his studies with all the advantages of books and literary society, and amassed and digested that prodigious fund of knowledge, which displays itself in his earliest publications. We know that he made theology a primary object, and judged that an acquaintance with the oriental languages was the best foundation for a thorough understanding of the Scriptures. In a tract, written when nearly three-score, he records with visible satisfaction his laborious method of acquiring the Hebrew. "He wrote," he tells us, "before he was twenty-four years of age, a sort of *Hexapla*; a thick volume in quarto, in the first column of which he inserted every word of the Hebrew Bible alphabetically ; and in five other columns, all the various interpretations of those words in the Chaldee, Syriac, Vulgate, Latin, Septuagint, and Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotian, that occur in the whole Bible. This he made for his own use, to know the Hebrew, not from the late rabbins, but from the ancient versions ; when, bating Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic, he read over the whole Polyglot." At the same time he mentions having written another volume in quarto of various lections and emendations of the Hebrew Text, drawn out of the ancient versions ; 'which, though done in these green years, would make a second part to the famous Capellus's *Critica Sacra* <sup>20</sup>.'

<sup>19</sup> *Life of Stillingfleet*, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Dr. Bentley's Proposals for printing a new Edition of the Greek Testa-*



Bentley, while under the protection of his patron, paid much attention to the criticism of the New Testament; a subject which he resumed with so much energy at a more advanced age. But his favourite objects of pursuit at this as well as every other period of life, were the classical authors; and those he studied in a manner at once so accurate and so comprehensive, as to lay a foundation for the most solid fame which has ever yet been built upon this department of literature. It may be remarked, that a scholar at that time possessed neither the aids nor the encouragements which are now presented to smooth the paths of literature. The grammars of the Latin and Greek languages were imperfectly and erroneously taught; and the critical scholar must have felt severely the absence of sufficient indexes, particularly of the voluminous scholiasts, grammarians, and later writers of Greece, in the examination of which no inconsiderable portion of a life might be consumed. Bentley, relying upon his own exertions, and the resources of his own mind, pursued an original path of criticism, in which the intuitive and subtile quickness of his genius qualified him to excel. In the faculty of memory, so important for such pursuits, he has himself candidly declared, that he was not particularly gifted<sup>21</sup>. Consequently he practised throughout life the precaution of noting in the margin of his books the suggestions and conjectures which rushed into his mind during their perusal. To this habit of laying up materials in store, we may partly attribute the sur-

Classical  
pursuits.

*ment, and St. Hierom's Latin Version, 1721, p. 35.* I am not aware what has become of these two manuscript volumes, or whether they have been preserved.

<sup>21</sup> *Dissertation on Phalaris, p. 421.* "I will freely own therefore to Mr. B. that my memory, which is none of the best, deceived me here."



CHAP. I.  
1685.

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prising rapidity with which some of his most important works were completed. He was also at the trouble of constructing for his own use indexes of authors quoted by the principal scholiasts, by Eustathius, and other ancient commentators, of a nature similar to those afterwards published by Fabricius, in his *Bibliotheca Græca*; which latter are the joint produce of the labour of various hands.

1685. There is no doubt that from the first Bentley looked forward to the clerical profession as his designation; yet he did not enter into holy orders till some years after the usual age. For this delay we shall be at no loss to account, if we recollect that he completed his twenty-third year at the very period of the accession of James the Second to the throne; and that this Prince's whole reign consisted of unceasing attempts to introduce Popery, and to overthrow the Church of England, by measures which amounted to a persecution of its members. Dr. Stillingfleet was at that time Prolocutor of the Lower House of Convocation, and took a great share in the councils of those illustrious fathers of the Church, to whose spirit and firmness its preservation at that alarming crisis is, under Divine Providence, mainly attributable. It was during the same period that some of his most important controversies were carried on; and in them, Bentley was believed to have been employed by him as a transcriber: that, however, was a mistake, though it is not unlikely that he assisted his patron's researches. Subsequently, in the controversy upon Phalaris, the Boylean party endeavoured to affront him with saying, 'How unnatural a step it is for an amanuensis to start up Professor of Divinity:' when, in reply, after exposing the folly and rudeness of such an attack, he adds, that 'he should never account it any disgrace



to have served Bishop Stillingfleet in any capacity of a scholar ; but that he was never amanuensis to his lordship, nor to any one else ; neither did his lordship ever make use of any amanuensis : so little regard had Mr. Boyle either to decency or truth <sup>22</sup>.

CHAP. I.  
1685.

<sup>22</sup> Preface to *Dissertation on Phalaris*, p. lxxviii.



## CHAPTER II.

*Dean Stillingfleet made Bishop of Worcester—Bentley goes with his pupil to Wadham College, Oxford—His acquaintance at Oxford; Mill, Bernard, Hody—His literary employments—Hephæstion—Lucretius—Bentley ordained deacon—Made chaplain to the Bishop of Worcester—Employed to purchase the Vossian library—Designs to collect the fragments of all the Greek poets—Bishop Lloyd—Suggestion of publishing the Greek lexicographers—Bentley's corrections of Hesychius—Verwey's edition—Chronicle of Malela—Gregory—Chilmead—Publication of Malela—Prolegomena by Hody—Bentley undertakes to write an Appendix—Account of the Chronicle—Epistola ad Millium—Correspondence with Bernard—Controversy with Hody—Reception of Bentley's first publication—Its contents—Its style—Bentley occupied in theology—Resumes classical studies—Undertakes Manilius.*

CHAP. II. 1689. WHEN the deliverance of the Nation and the Church had been effected by the Revolution, it was the first care of King William's government to fill the vacant bishopricks with divines most distinguished for ability and piety. In pursuance of this determination, Dean Stillingfleet, who was considered the ablest champion of the Establishment, was shortly after consecrated Bishop of Worcester.

It was about the same time that Bentley's pupil, James Stillingfleet, being of a proper age for the University, his father determined that he should be accompanied by his private tutor to Wadham College, Oxford. Cumberland asserts, that on this occasion the Bishop gave to Bentley the absolute choice between Oxford and Cambridge; and that he was induced to prefer the former by his desire to consult the manuscripts of the Bodleian Library<sup>1</sup>. There can be no doubt, that an aspiring scholar would rejoice in

<sup>1</sup> *Biographia Britannica*, vol. ii. p. 242.



the opportunity of examining the stores of learning deposited in that noble collection: but that the Bishop, who had sent his eldest son to his own college at Cambridge, should have been determined in the choice of an university for his second son by the private wish of his tutor, is, to say the least, highly improbable, and not to be credited upon an authority so frequently mistaken. What might be the real motives, is immaterial; it is sufficient to state, that at the beginning of 1689 Bentley attended his pupil to Wadham College, of which he became himself a member, and in the course of that year was incorporated Master of Arts, as holding the same degree in the sister University.

CHAP. II.  
1689.

July 4.

Bentley resided at Oxford under very auspicious circumstances: from his connection with the Bishop of Worcester, he obtained the acquaintance of several persons most distinguished in the University for station and ability, with whom his own merits presently placed him on a footing of intimacy. Among these we must particularly notice Dr. John Mill, Principal of St. Edmund's Hall, the well-known editor of the New Testament; Dr. Edward Bernard, celebrated for his researches in science, as well as in antiquities and chronology; and Mr. Humphrey Hody, tutor of Wadham, afterwards Professor of Greek, whose Dissertation against Aristeeas's account of the Septuagint Translators, written while a young man, had procured him an eminent and deserved reputation.

His acquaintance  
at Oxford.

Bentley lost no time in availing himself of the manuscript treasures of the Bodleian Library, to which his own character or the interest of his friends procured him an unreserved access: these were intended to be the materials for publications, which he medi-

His literary  
employ-  
ments.



CHAP. II. tated in widely different departments of literature.

1689.

We find him, with all the ardour of a young and sanguine scholar, at the same time designing to give the world new editions of Greek grammarians and of Latin poets. He collated three manuscripts of Hephæstion, found in the Baroccian collection, writing in the margin of his copy some notes of his own on that author, naturally the favourite of a metrical scholar<sup>2</sup>. He was also in correspondence with his friend William Wotton, then resident at St. John's College, Cambridge, (of which he was become a fellow) who transmitted to him collations and extracts from the libraries of his own University, as contributions to his various designs. One of Wotton's letters, which is preserved, begins with accurate specimens of the celebrated Beza manuscript of the Gospels, probably intended for the use of Dr. Mill, and then gives a careful collation from a copy of Macrobius in Bene't College, of all the passages of Lucretius quoted by that writer: from which we may infer, that Bentley was at this time meditating an edition of the Epicurean poet. Wotton's letter concludes with an anticipation of what the public might expect from the labours of his friend: "I should now," says he, "congratulate myself and the world upon the happy prospect of all those new discoveries we are like to have from you, when once you are well settled at Oxford. You know I write what I think; and therefore I hope you will make use of me, as

Lucretius.

<sup>2</sup> This volume, Turnebus's edition, (which contains also Bentley's Collations of the MS. of Hephæstion in Bishop Moore's library, and of that belonging to Caius College) is now deposited in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. Its contents have been published by Professor Gaisford, in his excellent edition of Hephæstion.



often as you think I can be in the least serviceable to you. I am your's affectionately, W. W.<sup>3</sup>"

CHAP. II.  
1689-90.

In the following year Bentley was ordained deacon by the Bishop of London, Dr. Henry Compton<sup>4</sup>; and shortly afterwards received the appointment of chaplain to his patron, the Bishop of Worcester, who had already bestowed the same distinction upon Hody, the College tutor of his son.

March 16.  
Ordained  
deacon.

Chaplain to  
the Bishop  
of Worces-  
ter.

About this time Bentley was employed by certain leading Heads at Oxford to negotiate the purchase of the books of Dr. Isaac Voss, Canon of Windsor, (better known by his classical name of Vossius), who was then lately dead. This library, the joint collection of himself and his learned father, Gerard John Vossius, abounded in scarce volumes both printed and manuscript, and was believed to be the best in existence belonging to any private individual. Bentley, who was going to town, had a private commission to propose to Adrian Beverland, the executor, a sum of money for this valuable library on behalf of the University; but accompanied with a caution to obtain it as much below the *maximum* as possible. During the progress of the negotiation, his brother, Matthew Voss, declared that the books could not be sold without his concurrence, and that Oxford should have them 500*l.* cheaper than the booksellers. Either in consequence of this hint, or from finding that a larger sum had been mentioned than the University could afford, or was likely to approve, the proposed terms were lowered by the Heads; whereupon the treaty was broken off, and the precious collection disposed of

Employed  
to purchase  
the Vossian  
library.

<sup>3</sup> This letter is the earliest of a collection found in Trinity Lodge, July 1820.

<sup>4</sup> From Baker's MSS. in the British Museum, extracted in *Gentleman's Magazine*, Nov. 1779.



CHAP. II. to the University of Leyden. Three letters from  
1690. Bentley to Bernard relating to this affair have been preserved, and testify his zeal to secure a treasure, the loss of which the scholars of this country have never ceased to deplore. There appears to have been some deception or collusion practised by Matthew Voss or by Beverland. Bentley's adversaries in the Phalaris Controversy just glance at this affair, for the purpose of hinting that the failure was owing to his mismanagement; an unfounded and ungrateful insinuation, which the letters just mentioned sufficiently contradict<sup>5</sup>.

Designs to  
 collect all  
 the Frag-  
 ments of  
 Greek  
 poets.

The work which Bentley had designed to be the foundation of his fame, was a complete collection of the Fragments of the Greek Poets<sup>6</sup>: an undertaking, the magnitude and difficulty of which those only can appreciate, who have ever endeavoured to collect the quotations of any one poet, scattered through the whole range of classical authors, as well as grammarians, scholiasts, and lexicographers. Some idea may be formed of the extent of this task, as well as of Bentley's qualifications for it, from the collection which he has actually made of the fragments of the single author, Callimachus. That his design was abandoned has always been a subject of regret among scholars: nevertheless he had reasons for relinquishing it, the validity of which it is impossible to deny. Such a work, however desirable, would not have been attended with advantages commensurate with the ne-

<sup>5</sup> The three letters from Bentley to Dr. Bernard in relation to the Vossian library (without date) are among the papers of the latter in the Bodleian. They were printed by Dr. Charles Burney, but not in their right order. They will be found properly arranged in the *Museum Criticum*, vol. ii. p. 535.

<sup>6</sup> *Epistola ad Millium*, p. 20.



cessary labour and research : since no degree of diligence could have ensured the same attention to all the poets in this multifarious assemblage, some inequality must have been observable in the performance : and the object itself would be better answered by several editors, each peculiarly versed in his own author, annexing to the entire works of the poets the broken and scattered fragments of those which have perished.

CHAP. II.  
1690.

Of the many distinguished friends to whose intimacy Bentley was introduced, no one took more interest in his literary career than Dr. William Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, the most learned of those seven prelates who had signalized themselves in the late reign, under the persecution of their infatuated monarch. His intercourse with Stillingfleet had given him opportunities of discovering the genius and acquirements of his chaplain, and he discerned the line in which they might be made peculiarly beneficial to literature. It appears to have been by his advice that Bentley undertook the gigantic task of publishing the Greek lexicographers. The plan proposed was, to print the three principal, Hesychius, Suidas, and the Etymologicon Magnum, in three columns on the same page, after the manner of Walton's Polyglot. It was calculated that they would fill three volumes in folio, and that Julius Pollux, (who could not be reduced to alphabetical order,) along with Erotianus, Phrynichus, &c. and an appendix from manuscripts, would make a fourth<sup>7</sup>. This project met with great encouragement; but upon his mentioning it in a letter to Dr. Bernard, that friend intimated some doubt of its propriety. Bentley's design of publishing Hesychius

Bishop  
Lloyd.

Suggests to  
Bentley to  
publish all  
the Greek  
Lexicogra-  
phers.

<sup>7</sup> Bentley's letter to Bernard. *Museum Criticum*, vol. ii. p. 538.



CHAP. II. chius was long and fondly cherished, but we hear no  
1690. further mention of the triumvirate: we may therefore conclude that he speedily abandoned the plan, on account of its inconvenience: the method pursued in the three principal lexicons is so dissimilar, that they could not be printed in the same page without awkwardness; nor could the notes upon them be combined in the same series, without a degree of embarrassment not compensated by any advantage to the reader.

Bentley's  
 corrections  
 of Hesychius.

Verwey's  
 edition.

The Lexicon of Hesychius was that which had principally employed the sagacity and learning of our critic. He it was who first discovered the two principal sources of error, which had so corrupted the text of this most important glossary of the Greek language, as to render it comparatively useless: first, that transcribers had been in the habit of taking up words found in the margin of their copy, and jumbling them into the explanation given of other words; and, secondly, a neglect of alphabetical order. By attention to these and other particulars, he had been enabled to effect above five thousand corrections in Hesychius<sup>8</sup>. An edition of that lexicon had been above ten years in preparation at the Hague, by John Verwey, a schoolmaster, who disguised his cacophonous name by the classical title of 'Phorbæus;' and for his use the remarks of the learned were put in requisition from all quarters; Joseph Hill, a nonconformist minister of an English congregation at the Hague, better known as the publisher of Schrevelius's Lexicon, supplied him with materials, and came to England to procure assistance for the work. Bentley's learning being already matter of notoriety, he

<sup>8</sup> *Epist. ad Mill.* p. 39.



was applied to by this person for contributions to Hesychius; but he naturally preferred to publish himself the fruit of his labours. Besides, a printed specimen of Verwey's work had shown that he was destitute of every qualification, except diligence, for his undertaking<sup>9</sup>. The projected work was rendered abortive in the following year by the death of the editor.

CHAP. II.  
1690.

While Bentley was employed upon this and other works of magnitude, his attention was by mere accident drawn to the subject which actually established his unrivalled fame as a Greek critic. Among the manuscripts of Francis Barocci, which enrich the Bodleian library, was found the copy of a Greek historical work, compiled in the beginning of the ninth century, by *Joannes Malela Antiochenus*<sup>10</sup>. This is one of the numerous chronicles drawn up by Christian writers, of events from Adam to their own time; the real value of which consists in their being taken from older writings that have perished, and from their being the sources whence Suidas and other lexicographers drew their information upon chronology and history<sup>11</sup>. Accordingly, references had been made to this author by Usher, Selden, Pearson, Lloyd, and other learned men, who had access to this the sole existing copy of the work; while notes had been

Chronicle of  
Malela.

<sup>9</sup> See Bentley's and Bernard's letters, *Mus. Crit.* vol. ii. p. 538.; also Alberti's notice of this undertaking, in his *Præfatio ad Hesychium*, sect. ii. p. xxiv.

<sup>10</sup> The beginning and the end of this manuscript being torn out, the author of the work would not have been known, had not Gregory discovered a passage in it, which is quoted in another old work as from *Joannes Malela*. See Hody, *Prolegom.* § xliii.

<sup>11</sup> Full accounts of these *Chronica* may be found in Cave's *Historia Literaria*, and in Fabricius's *Bibliotheca Græca*, vol. vii.



CHAP. II. written upon it and an edition undertaken by John  
 1690. Gregory, a man of prodigious learning, in the time  
 Gregory. of Charles I., before the civil troubles interrupted  
 such pursuits, and involved all the king's friends in  
 common ruin. After him the manuscript was taken  
 Chilmead. up by Edmund Chilmead, of Christ Church, the  
 compiler of the catalogue of manuscripts in the Bod-  
 leian : he translated the book into Latin, and wrote  
 a commentary upon it ; but when it was just ready  
 for the press, he also was expelled the University in  
 1648 by the prevailing Parliamentary party. Chil-  
 mead, happening to be an excellent musician, was  
 enabled to procure bread by performing at a weekly  
 concert in London till his death. But the *Chronicle*  
 of Antioch remained unprinted till the time of which  
 we are speaking, when the curators of the Sheldon  
 press complied with the wishes of the learned, among  
 whom the study of ancient chronology had become  
 fashionable, and committed him to the press, along  
 Publication of Malela. with Chilmead's notes and translation, under the  
 superintendence of Dr. Mill. When it was partly  
 Prolego- printed, they applied to Hody to write the *Prolego-*  
 mena by Hody. *mena* ; a task which he performed in an able and satis-  
 factory style. He first establishes that the author is  
 not the person generally quoted as *Joannes Antioche-*  
*nus*, but is distinguished from him by the surname  
 of *Malela* ; the confusion having arisen from their  
 being both of Antioch, and both writers of chronicles  
 from Adam to their own time. He next investigates  
 the age of this writer, who from the manuscript end-  
 ing with the thirty-fifth year of Justinian, A.D. 560,  
 had been supposed by Bishop Lloyd and others to  
 have lived in the reign of that Emperor : Hody  
 proves, by an ingenious argument from internal evi-



dence, that he must have belonged to a later period, when the Greek language was still more degenerate than in the time of Justinian. CHAP. II.  
1690.

Before the *Prolegomena* were printed, Bentley happening to express to Dr. Mill some curiosity about the yet unpublished Malela, he was indulged with a sight of the sheets from the press, upon condition of writing down his remarks to be printed as an appendix to the book. Finding, however, that the author was unspeakably dull, and his information continually erroneous, he repented, and wished to give up the undertaking; but Mill was too anxious for the credit of the publication, and the fame which he foresaw it would procure to his young friend, to release him from his promise<sup>12</sup>. It was, besides, the desire of Bishop Lloyd, who took a constant interest in whatever concerned the advancement of knowledge, that Bentley should publish his remarks on Malela<sup>13</sup>. This was undertaken in the latter part of 1690, when our critic was upon the point of quitting Oxford, and resuming his residence with the Bishop's family in Park-street, Westminster: he accordingly transcribed and carried with him such parts of the work as supplied suitable topics for a dissertation.

Bentley undertakes to write an appendix.

The first pages of the Chronicle being lost, it commences in the midst of the fabulous line of Ægyptian kings; the death of Vulcan, and the succession of his son Sol. The early part consists of a laboured attempt to reconcile mythology with history; to accomplish which the narratives of the poets are reduced to the plainest and dullest annals: it then passes rapidly over the authentic part of history, till it reaches the

Account of the Chronicle.

<sup>12</sup> *Epistola ad Millium*, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Dissertation on Phalaris*, Pref. p. lxxxviii.



CHAP. II. Christian Emperors, when it becomes diffuse, without  
1690. the recommendation of accuracy.

Such was the author who was destined to be the vehicle for first establishing Bentley's unrivalled reputation. The passages selected to be the subjects of his remarks consisted either of verses reduced by the compiler to his own prose, which Bentley restores with equal learning and cleverness; or of allusions to the poets, particularly the Attic dramatists. In his commentary upon these extracts, he displays a very wide extent of reading, not only in the classical authors, but in the literature of later ages; and shows that he had well examined and sifted the various writers whom he makes subservient to his criticism.

Epistola ad  
 Millium.

Correspond-  
 ence with  
 Bernard.

Having thrown his remarks into the appropriate form of an Epistle to Dr. Mill, he transmitted them to the Oxford press, and requested his friend Dr. Bernard to read the proof sheets, and communicate to him his remarks and strictures. The correspondence upon this subject has been preserved by Bernard, and is on every account curious and characteristic. Bernard, whose regard for Bentley is very conspicuous, picks out a few points in the Essay, upon which he animadverts with the spirit of a friend, and the authority of a veteran scholar: Bentley defends and justifies his opinions with the confidence of a person thoroughly master of his subject, who feels himself in a condition rather to impart than to ask instruction. The doctor, far from being offended at this freedom of dissent, shows increased admiration of his friend's erudition and sagacity, particularly upon questions of orthography and metre; and, before the close of the discussion, declares his conviction that he is the only person living competent to restore the remains of the Greek poets from the depredations of time; a com-



pliment which Bentley, though he affects to consider it spoken in jest, evidently resolves to merit<sup>14</sup>. CHAP. II.  
1691.

The Epistle was shown, at the author's request, to the celebrated Henry Dodwell, one of the greatest living authorities upon questions of ancient chronology, with whom he appears to have lived, while at Oxford, on terms of intimacy and friendship<sup>15</sup>. In April 1691 it was ready for publication<sup>16</sup>, but its appearance was delayed till June by a whimsical occurrence, which gave to Bentley's first public exhibition a controversial character. Happening to pass through Oxford about this time with the Bishop's family on their way to Worcester, he was taken to task by Hody, his brother chaplain, for terming their author *Malelas*, whereas all the learned had hitherto designated him by the name of *Malela*. Bentley, considering this censure as a challenge, adds to his Epistle a full and satisfactory examination of the whole question of the proper orthography of Greek words when latinized, and fairly shows, that though the names of slaves and others adopted by the vulgar, received the Latin termination, as, *Marsya*, *Sosia*, *Demea* &c., yet the practice of the best authors of Rome was to retain the Greek orthography in words of similar ending, as *Pythagoras*, *Leonidas*, *Anaxagoras*, *Perdiccas*, and, consequently, that all analogy was in favour of *Malelas*<sup>17</sup>. Hereupon Hody shifted his ground, and declared that all this learning was expended in vain, since the nominative was not *ὁ Μαλέλας*, but *ὁ Μαλέλα*, Controversy  
with Hody.

<sup>14</sup> *Museum Criticum*, vol. ii. p. 540, 544.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* p. 542, 543

<sup>16</sup> Correspondence of Bentley and Bernard. Also a manuscript letter of Dr. Mill.

<sup>17</sup> The real doubt respecting the orthography of the name is of a different kind. It is in one place called *Malelas*, in another, *Malalas*. See *Epist. ad Mill.* p. 77—84.



CHAP. II. which, like other barbarous names, was retained in  
1691. the Greek undeclined. Bentley immediately wrote  
 a refutation of this new position, which is, in fact,  
 the least tenable of the two, and which he shows to  
 be contrary both to analogy and authority. His dis-  
 quisitions upon such dry philological questions are  
 expressed in a sprightly and amusing style. Hody,  
 much nettled at this state of the contest, before the  
 publication of the book, was in time to prefix four  
 closely-printed pages in favour of *Malela*; which,  
 however, tend only to establish the opposite opinion,  
 by showing the insufficiency of the best arguments  
 that could be produced against it. This piece of  
 learning concludes with a singular prayer against  
 arrogance, or bitterness of style; evidently designed  
 to fix these charges upon his antagonist<sup>18</sup>. This  
 being the first occasion on which we find Bentley  
 accused of presumption, it is my duty to declare his  
 vindication. That he chose to maintain his point,  
 instead of deferring to the practice of others, when  
 convinced that the truth was on his side, resembles  
 neither pedantry nor presumption; and in his manner  
 of doing this, I observe nothing which ought to have  
 given offence to his friend, whom he mentions in  
 another part of the Epistle in terms of handsome com-  
 mendation. The truth appears to be, that Hody felt  
 piqued at his brother chaplain interfering at all with  
 a matter which he conceived to belong to himself;  
 and was severely mortified when he found that he  
 had drawn upon himself an antagonist, whose powers  
 he had so greatly underrated. There is too much  
 reason to believe, that the offence given by this trivial  
 cause was never afterwards healed.

<sup>18</sup> This effusion, the solemnity of which was not well suited to the occasion, was afterwards copied in 'Boyle's Examination,' p. 288.



Malelas had been long and anxiously expected by the learned ; and his appearance interested them, not from his own merits, which were slender, but from those of the Appendix. The various and accurate learning, and the astonishing sagacity displayed in the Epistle to Mill, attracted the attention of every person capable of judging upon such subjects. The originality of Bentley's style, the boldness of his opinions, and his secure reliance upon unfailing stores of learning, all marked him out as a scholar to be ranked with Scaliger, Casaubon, and Gataker. Notwithstanding the reluctance with which the pretensions of a new author are usually admitted, and the small number of persons to whom such writings were likely to recommend themselves, we find that the fame of our critic was at once established : in particular, among foreign scholars, the sensation produced by this essay of a young and unknown writer, seems to have been unexampled ; and Grævius and Spanheim, the chiefs of the learned world, pronounced him ' the rising constellation ' of literature, and anticipated the brilliancy of his course <sup>19</sup>.

CHAP. II.  
1691.

Reception of  
Bentley's  
first publi-  
cation.

The learning of this essay seems like the flowing of an inexhaustible stream. Of the many topics which claim attention, we may particularly notice, that the true nature of the compilation of Hesychius, and the methods by which its errors might be corrected, were

Its contents.

<sup>19</sup> " Richardus Bentleius, novum sed splendidissimum Britanniae lumen," *Grævius Præf. ad Callimachum*. " Novum idemque jam lucidum litteratæ Britanniae sidus Richardus Bentleius." *Spanheim in Julian*, (p. 19), " Et novissime etiam in eruditissima ad Jo. Millium Epistola post Jo. Malelam edita, luculenter adductis plurimis eam in rem exemplis adseruit oriens novum litteratæ Britanniae sidus Richardus Bentleius." *Spanheim in Callim.* p. 455. " Quod statuit in Epistola Malelæ addita Vir eruditissimus, et a quo magnum præclaris doctrinarum studiis incrementum licet augurari." *Ibid.* p. 605.



CHAP. II. here first made known ; and that to scholars following  
1691. the path pointed out by Bentley, the main improvements in his Lexicon from that day to the present must be attributed<sup>20</sup>. Among other incidental remarks upon ancient metre, there is found the rule relative to the connection of verses in an anapæstic system, commonly called the *Synaphea*: this law, though preserved by all the Greek dramatic writers, as well as by the old Latin tragedians, had been disregarded, or rather was not known, by Scaliger, Grotius, Buchanan, and other modern writers of anapæsts, who fancied that a short syllable might be made long by its position at the end of any line, and assumed this privilege with as little hesitation as if they had been writing hexameters. For our more correct notions of this measure we are unquestionably indebted to Bentley<sup>21</sup>. There is also displayed an accurate and intimate acquaintance with the characters and plots of the lost dramas, the periods of their performance, and whatever else can be gathered respecting the history of the Greek stage from scattered fragments of the ancient *Didascalie* still in existence ; a curious as well as intricate topic, which Bentley treats with a masterly hand. After this specimen, it is perfectly astonishing to find his adversaries in the Phalaris controversy attacking him on a ground with which he had shown himself so peculiarly acquainted.

Its style.

The style of the Epistle is animated and lively, and implies the gratification felt by a writer engaged

<sup>20</sup> *Epist. ad Mill.* p. 33.

<sup>21</sup> *Epist. ad Mill.* p. 26. The rule of the *Synaphea* had been hinted by Terentianus Maurus, p. 58, l. 10; but Bentley's remarks were clearly drawn from his own reading and observation. Dawes very unjustly accuses him of plagiarism in this respect. *Miscellanea Critica*, p. 29, 30.



in a field where his resources are abundant, and where he is sure to instruct and interest his reader. CHAP. II.  
1691.

A person who opens it with the expectation of a dry disquisition upon certain abstruse topics, is agreeably surprised by meeting with information not less entertaining than profound, and is irresistibly carried on by the spirited character of the remarks. The diction, indeed, though clear and luminous, is not free from the redundancy and flippancy of a young writer; and the expressions are now and then somewhat boastful; a fault which would be readily pardoned, did it not too frequently occur in his subsequent productions. In the conclusion Bentley takes occasion to notice the critical edition of the New Testament, the great work on which Dr. Mill had been many years labouring, and on which he was destined to labour many more; giving at the same time a remarkable specimen of his own acuteness in sacred criticism<sup>22</sup>. His opinion of what might be expected from the projected edition proved exceedingly gratifying to Mill, who, in a letter which is preserved, shows that he valued this praise not as the compliment of a partial friend, but as the testimony of one to whose judgment the world was sure to pay attention<sup>23</sup>.

Such was the production which established the fame of Bentley, at the age of twenty-nine, in the highest rank of literary eminence; and from that moment the eyes of every scholar in Europe were fixed

<sup>22</sup> *Epist. ad Mill.* p. 96.

<sup>23</sup> This letter, dated March 31, 1691, is in the collection belonging to Trinity College. It begins thus: "Dear Sir,—I received your last papers, wherein you are infinitely too kind in your character of our present work, and that which we design. I promise you to alter nothing; but I shall have much ado to be as good as my word; this discourse of yours will raise the expectation of the world so much, that I shall not be able, I doubt, in any tolerable degree to answer it. But I submit, and am highly sensible of the great honour you do me herein: I will endeavour to alter nothing."



CHAP. II. upon his operations. Great as is the number of persons who have since appeared with success in this department, it would not be easy to name a critical essay, which for accuracy, ingenuity, and original learning, can take place of the 'Appendix to Malelas.'

June 1691.  
Bentley occupied in  
theology.

Resumes  
classical  
studies.  
Undertakes  
to publish  
Manilius.

At the time of his introduction to the world as an author, Bentley was at Worcester, engaged in the study of theology. He had resolved, as soon as he had finished his Epistle to Mill, to devote himself exclusively to such pursuits as became the chaplain of a learned prelate, and to abandon classical books for a season: such at least was the purpose which he avowed to Dr. Bernard, and it drew from his correspondent an expostulation, and advice that he should combine with theology those critical pursuits in which he was so peculiarly qualified to excel<sup>24</sup>. Whether Bentley was ever serious in his design of relinquishing his favourite authors, may fairly be doubted. At all events, he was speedily summoned back to them by the general voice of the learned world, which, while it applauded the first specimen of his talents, called for their fresh exertion. Accordingly we find him preparing for the press new editions of Philostratus, of Hesychius, and of Manilius: to undertake at the same time three authors of such different descriptions, and requiring in the editor such different qualifications, is a proof of the fertility of his learning and the energy of his mind. Manilius, a poet for whom he had always felt a partiality, was to have appeared the foremost<sup>25</sup>. A readiness was shown in

<sup>24</sup> See Bentley's and Bernard's Correspondence.—*Museum Criticum*, vol. ii. Epist. x. p. 546.

<sup>25</sup> He had expressed somewhere in company a very strong opinion in favour of Manilius; saying, that Ovid and Manilius were the only poets that had *wit* among the ancients. His antagonists in the Phalaris controversy had heard of this conversation, and thus sneer at the comparison:



all quarters to further and assist his schemes. Sir Edward Sherburn, an old cavalier, who had formerly translated the first book of Manilius, and written a commentary upon it, lent him some scarce editions, as well as a box containing collections relative to this poet, formerly belonging to Gaspar Gevartius, which he had some time before purchased at Antwerp<sup>26</sup>. He obtained the collation of a Leipsic manuscript, made by John Feller. His friend Dr. Bernard lent him a manuscript of his own, and applied to Spanheim to procure a collation of one which had belonged to Isaac Vossius, and which, with the rest of his library, had gone to Leyden<sup>27</sup>. But Bentley was

CHAP. II.  
1691.

“He forgets, I believe, when and where a certain critic of our times maintained that Ovid and Manilius were the only two poets that had wit among the ancients. ’Tis just as if I should say, that Sir W. Temple and Dr. Bentley are the two best bred writers living; or, to put it in the doctor’s more learned and polite way, that Nireus and Thersites were the two most *formose men that repaired to the siege of Ilium*.” *Boyle’s Examination*, p. 28. Bentley says in his Reply, “I am not at all concerned to justify this criticism, for I know not that ever I said so. But however, not to desert Manilius, for whom I have an esteem, I see no reason at all why he that said this should be ashamed of it. When the Examiner reads Manilius (for by his censure one would guess he yet had not) he will find in the best editions what Scaliger says of him: ‘A most ingenious poet, a most elegant writer, that could manage an obscure and knotty subject with that clearness and smoothness of style; equal to Ovid in sweetness, and superior in majesty.’ Thus we see one of the greatest scholars among all the moderns, and a very great poet himself, thought Manilius a very witty one; and just as that ‘certain critic’ did, has joined him with Ovid.” *Dissert. on Phal.* p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> *Epist. ad Grævium*, p. 2. Letter to Bernard, *Mus. Crit.* vol. ii. p. 556. Pref. to *Dissert. on Phal.* p. xlv. Before Bentley received Sir Edward’s collection, he had collated an old Italian edition, without date of place or year, which is in the Arundel library, given to the Royal Society. This collation, as far as the middle of the second book, he entered in the margin of his copy of the Aldine Manilius; a book which was obligingly sent for my inspection by its possessor, the late Joseph Cradock, Esq. of Gumley Hall, Leicestershire. Bentley says at the beginning, “*Collatus cum editione vetusta, et (ut opinor) omnium principe, in 4to. ex Bibliotheca Arundeliana:*” but he adds in a later hand, “*Sed postea habui duas vetustiores.*”

<sup>27</sup> Letter to Bernard, *Mus. Crit.* vol. ii. p. 555. “I cannot express my



CHAP. II. diverted from these occupations to establish a reputation in a different field.

1691.

thankfulness to you, that you will so much engage yourself for me as to ask that favour of Mr. Spanheim. I could have wished you would have made use of Gronovius, who is used to such things; the other, they say, is a very high and proud sort of a blade." This extract is rather curious: Bentley, we shall soon find, had reason to alter his opinion both of Gronovius and of Spanheim.



## CHAPTER III.

*Hon. Robert Boyle—His lectureship—Bentley appointed first lecturer—Confutation of Atheism—Mr. Evelyn—The principles of Hobbes—Newton's discoveries—Bentley first makes them generally known—Consults Newton himself—Bentley's style—Merits of the lectures—Bentley's first opponent—Bishop Kidder succeeds—Bentley made Prebendary of Worcester—Excites envy—His haughtiness of manner—Correspondence with Grævius—A tract of Rubenius—Grævius's edition of Callimachus—Bentley undertakes the Fragments—Joshua Barnes—Epistles of Euripides—Bentley's opinion of them—Barnes's behaviour.*

THE Honourable Robert Boyle, youngest son of Richard, first Earl of Cork, died on the 30th of December 1691. This personage, belonging to a family remarkably prolific in talent, though his four brothers enjoyed separate peerages, has himself ennobled his name by honours still more splendid and durable. His works on natural and experimental philosophy, particularly on hydrostatics and pneumatics, and his own improvements of the air pump, have placed his name in a rank second only to that of Newton: as a chemist, he takes the lead of all his contemporaries; and in his theological writings, he has so blended philosophy with religion as to exhibit to the world the true value of scientific pursuits. The merits of this extraordinary character, and the extent of his researches in most departments of human knowledge, are detailed by Bishop Burnet in a funeral sermon: from this eulogy it appears, that Mr. Boyle had been in the habit of expending no less than a thousand pounds every year in works of charity and beneficence, particularly in the propagation of Christianity. Wishing that in his death he might promote

CHAP. III.

1692.

Hon. Robert Boyle.



CHAP. III. the same cause to which he had devoted his life, he  
1692. bequeathed by his will a salary of fifty pounds a year,  
 His lecture- to found a lectureship for the defence of religion  
 ship. against infidels. The lecturer was to be annually  
 chosen, and to deliver eight discourses in the year in  
 one of the churches of the metropolis<sup>1</sup>.

Feb. 13.  
 Bentley ap-  
 pointed first  
 lecturer.

The care of this trust was bequeathed by Mr. Boyle to four of his particular friends, Dr. Thomas Tenison, then newly advanced to the bishoprick of Lincoln, Sir Henry Ashurst, Sir John Rotheram, and Mr. John Evelyn, the accomplished author of the *Sylva*. The trustees forthwith nominated Mr. Bentley as lecturer for the first year; an appointment which he owed principally to the high opinion entertained of him by Bishop Tenison<sup>2</sup>. We can hardly conceive a greater compliment to the merits of a young man, only in deacon's orders, than the selection of him from the whole clerical profession, to be the first champion in such a cause, and that too upon an institution to which the celebrity of the founder was in itself sufficient to draw the eyes of the public. At several different periods of his life, he mentions this distinction, in such terms as show, that he considered it the greatest of the honours with which he was ever invested<sup>3</sup>.

Confutation  
 of Atheism.

The manner in which the lecturer discharged his office must have surpassed even the expectation of his patrons. The subject of his discourses was, 'a Confutation of Atheism.' It may be observed, that the doctrines of Spinoza and Hobbes had made consider-

<sup>1</sup> See the bequest in the Dedication prefixed to Bentley's *Boyle's Lectures*.

<sup>2</sup> *Evelyn's Mem.* ii. p. 31. "We made choice of one Mr. Bentley, chaplain to the Bishop of Worcester."

<sup>3</sup> In his letter to Grævius, May 15, 1694. Pref. to *Dissert. on Phalaris*, 1699, p. lxxxiv. *Proposals for an Edition of the New Testament*, in 1720. Reply to the Articles of Accusation brought against him before the Bishop of Ely, in 1733.



able progress in that age among the higher classes of society, and were particularly dangerous from the insidious way in which they undermined all belief in natural and revealed religion. Both these writers professed indeed to acknowledge the existence of a God; but by denying the Divine providence in the government of the world, and by representing the existence of the universe as the result of necessity, they conducted their disciples to the very depths of atheism. The metaphysical subtilty of their reasonings, the assumption of a calm and philosophical tone of inquiry, and the apparent novelty of their dogmas, combined to mislead the unwary. The positions of Hobbes had been ably combated by Cudworth in his 'Intellectual System,' and by Cumberland in his book '*De Legibus Naturæ*;' but these works were not sufficiently popular to resist an evil, which had spread so far as to become seriously alarming.

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In his first lecture, delivered at St. Martin's Church, March 7. Bentley exposes 'the folly of atheism, even with respect to the present life:' and in those which follow, he successively confutes the atheists from a consideration of 'the faculties of the soul,' 'the structure of human bodies,' and 'the origin and frame of the world.'

The reader of these discourses is informed and delighted by the variety of knowledge which they contain, and their close and convincing train of reasoning. The success with which Bentley unmasks the tenets of the atheist, grapples with his arguments, and exposes his fallacies, has never been surpassed, and scarcely equalled, in the wars of controversy. He steadily follows up his antagonist, and never fails to dislodge him from his positions. Various as are the topics which come under discussion, he appears at home in all, and displays a familiarity with meta-



CHAP. III. 1692. physics, natural history, and philosophy, altogether wonderful in a person coming fresh from the field of classical criticism. His ancient learning is introduced in a happy and agreeable manner, when he compares the theories of modern sceptics with those of the heathen philosophers. The followers of Hobbes having had recourse to metaphysical refinements, in order to deprive the Divine nature of its essential attributes, as well as to establish theories of materialism, Bentley encounters them on their own ground; and by examining the question according to the system recently promulgated by Locke in his 'Essay on the Human Understanding,' exposes the inconsistencies of which they are guilty, when they represent an infinite and eternal Godhead as a corporeal essence, and give to mere matter the faculty of thinking. He agrees with that philosopher in holding, that the notion of a Deity is not innate, and seeks the proofs of his existence and attributes from the operations of the human mind, the organization of animal nature, and the structure of the inanimate creation; and, while he continually reduces his opponents to an absurdity, he establishes his own positions with the closeness and severity of mathematical demonstration.

April 4.

Mr. Evelyn, being present at the delivery of the second of these sermons, formed a most exalted opinion of the powers of the lecturer, whose acquaintance he forthwith cultivated, and continued to be his intimate correspondent for several years<sup>4</sup>. On his motion, Bentley was desired by the trustees to print the lectures. When the three first had appeared, his friend Dr. Bernard suggested the expediency of reply-

<sup>4</sup> *Evelyn's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 32. The second lecture was preached at Bow Church.



ing to the particular objections brought against the CHAP. III.  
 Christian revelation, and especially those of the Jews : 1692.  
 to which Bentley answered, “ I cannot think I should  
 do well to balk the proofs of a Deity, to attack either  
 Theists or Jews. The Jews do us little hurt ; and  
 perhaps to bring their objections into the pulpit and  
 the vulgar language, out of their present obscurity,  
 would not do well ; and few would care to read or  
 hear such discourses :” adding, that ‘ of all the parts  
 of his task,’ (then probably expected to continue for  
 three years) ‘ this should be the last that he would  
 meddle with.’ So much was he impressed with the  
 necessity of overturning the system of Hobbes, of The princi-  
ples of  
Hobbes.  
 which ‘ the taverns and coffee-houses, nay, West-  
 minster Hall, and the very churches, were full.’ He  
 was convinced, from personal observation, that ‘ not  
 one English infidel in a hundred was other than a  
 Hobbist ;’ and that they all well knew that his theory  
 of a corporeal God was a pretence to elude the penal-  
 ties of the law, or, to use Bentley’s own expression,  
 ‘ a mere sham to get his book printed <sup>5</sup> ;’ for in those  
 days, it seems, religion could not be made the object  
 of open attacks and insults with impunity. Bentley  
 was in fact meditating that most important discussion  
 which concludes his course of lectures, the demon-  
 stration of a Divine providence, from the physical  
 constitution of the universe, as demonstrated by New- Newton’s  
discoveries.  
 ton. The *Principia* had now been published about  
 six years ; but the sublime discoveries of that work  
 were yet little known, owing not merely to the obsta-  
 cles which oppose the reception of novelty, but to the  
 difficulty of comprehending the proofs whereby they  
 are established. There has been preserved among  
 Bentley’s papers a manuscript in Newton’s own hand,

<sup>5</sup> Letter to Dr. Bernard, of May 28. *Museum Criticum*, vol. ii. p. 557.



CHAP. III. containing directions respecting the books to be read  
1692. as a preparation for the perusal of his *Principia*.

Bentley, for whose use they appear to have been drawn up, having a mind well adapted for mathematical reasoning, not only made himself master of the system, but was able to discern the purpose which it might serve in demonstrating the providence and benevolence of the Creator. Atheistical writers had propounded theories, in which the creation of the world out of chaos, and the subsequent maintenance of our System, were explained by what they termed 'natural causes.' Such schemes, which excluded all immediate agency of the Divine will, had been numerous; but the fact was that they all contradicted the laws of nature upon which they pretended to be founded, as completely as was done by the Epicurean hypothesis of atoms descending down an infinite space by an inherent principle of gravitation tending not towards other matter, but towards a *vacuum*, and verging *from* the perpendicular. The erroneous but prevalent system of Des Cartes, which supposed the planets to be carried round the sun by the force of vortices, afforded too great a handle for atheistical reasoners, not to be pressed into their service. But our incomparable philosopher had now demonstrated the falsehood of the Cartesian notions, and established the general law of gravity, and whatever relates to the motions, bulks, and densities of the planets, by proofs never to be shaken. To Bentley belongs the undoubted merit of having been the first to lay open these discoveries in a popular form, and to explain their irresistible force in the proof of a Deity. This constitutes the subject of his seventh and eighth sermons; pieces admirable for the clearness with which the whole question is developed, as well as for the logical precision of their arguments. Among

Bentley first  
 makes them  
 generally  
 known.



other topics, he shows how contradictory to the principles of philosophy is the notion of matter contained in the Solar System having been once diffused over a chaotic space, and afterwards combined into the large bodies of the sun, planets, and secondaries, by the force of mutual gravitation ; and he explains that the planets could never have obtained the transverse motion, which causes them to revolve round the sun in orbits nearly circular, from the agency of any cause except the arm of an almighty Creator. From these and other subjects of physical astronomy, as well as from the discoveries of Boyle, the founder of the lecture, respecting the nature and properties of the atmosphere, a conviction is irresistibly impressed upon the mind of the wisdom and benevolence of the Deity. We are assured that the effect of these discourses was such, that atheism was deserted as untenable ground ; or, to use his own expression, the atheists were ‘ silent since that time, and sheltered themselves under deism <sup>6</sup>.’

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1692.

Before he committed to the press his essays upon topics of a nature so difficult and so novel, Bentley had the precaution to consult Mr. Newton himself respecting the use to which he had turned his discoveries. He addressed, accordingly, certain queries to the philosopher, then residing in Trinity College, Cambridge, which gave rise to a curious and important correspondence. Newton’s four letters on this occasion have long been before the public<sup>7</sup> : they

Consults  
Newton  
himself.

<sup>6</sup> Preface to the ‘*Present State of Trinity College, in Cambridge*,’ p. i. See also Whiston’s *Memoirs of his own Life*, vol. i. p. 105.

<sup>7</sup> They were given by Dr. Richard Bentley, the nephew and executor, to Cumberland, while a student at Trinity College ; and were printed by him, in a separate pamphlet, in 1756. This publication was reviewed by Dr. Samuel Johnson, in the *Literary Magazine*, vol. i. p. 89. See *Johnson’s Works*, vol. ii. p. 328. The original letters are preserved in Trinity College, to which society they were given by Cumberland, a short time before his death.



CHAP. III. commence with two remarkable declarations, the ob-  
1692. ject which he had in view while writing his immortal work, and a disavowal of that intuitive genius for which the world gave him credit: he says, “When I wrote my treatise about our System, I had an eye upon such principles as might work with considering men for the belief of a Deity, and nothing can rejoice me more than to find it useful for that purpose. But if I have done the public any service this way, it is due to nothing but industry and patient thought.” The matter of Bentley’s inquiries relative to the Solar System, is repeatedly discussed by Newton in a manner which speaks the candid as well as powerful character of his mind. Upon most points of consultation he confirms Bentley’s views, and supplies him with additional arguments: some of his opinions he corrects and modifies<sup>8</sup>; and in one or two cases it appears that he had not himself considered all the deductions to be drawn from his own discoveries, and that the questions proposed were new to him; whence Dr. Samuel Johnson, in a cursory review of these four letters, takes occasion to remark, ‘how even the mind of Newton gains ground gradually upon darkness.’ In the publication of his essays Bentley of course availed himself of all the suggestions of his illustrious correspondent: his reasonings and conclusions therefore appear with the highest of all human

<sup>8</sup> This is particularly the case respecting the idea of gravity being essential and inherent in matter; a position which the atheists maintained, and which Bentley had in the first instance conceded; but upon Newton’s begging, in his second letter, that ‘he would not ascribe that notion to him; for the cause of gravity was what he did not pretend to know, and therefore would take more time to consider of it;’ Bentley was led, by reflection, to bring arguments *against* the theory of ‘innate gravity;’ and then shows, that even were this principle allowed to be essential to matter, yet the creation could neither have been originally formed, nor afterwards maintained, by its mere agency, without the providence of a Divine Being.—p. 246, 6th edit.



sanctions; and this department of natural theology CHAP. III.  
has perhaps never yet been so satisfactorily illus- 1692.  
trated <sup>9</sup>.

Some notice must be taken of the style of these Bentley's  
style.  
compositions, which is remarkable not only for its  
force and nervousness, but for a certain epigrammatic  
and witty turn which gives it a peculiar character and  
effect. We find it recorded as the opinion of Dr.  
Johnson, that Bentley, in the composition of his ser-  
mons, 'had his eye upon the writings of Dr. South <sup>10</sup>.'  
I confess myself unable to discover marks of imita-  
tion, or indeed of resemblance, further than any two  
bold and strong writers may be termed similar. The  
style is original, and is the same as distinguished  
Bentley's writings at every period of his life; it drew  
its character from nothing but from his own mind, and  
like that was manly, bold, and uncompromising. It  
certainly wants the polish which it would have re-  
ceived had he begun to write about twenty years later,  
when the harmony of a period was more cultivated in  
English composition; but his words and phrases are  
so expressive and appropriate, that the reader would  
be unwilling to change them for any refinements of  
diction. He wrote as he thought, in a pointed and  
logical tone, and as one who studies only his matter,  
while he relies upon the clearness of his conceptions  
for appropriate expressions. The consequence is that  
every sentence has its weight, and impresses itself  
upon the mind and memory of the reader. In respect  
to the pointed wit and sarcasm, and the occasional

<sup>9</sup> The original of the first of these letters, dated Dec. 10, 1692, is in-  
dorsed with the following note, in Bentley's hand:—"Mr. Newton's  
answer to some queries sent by me, after I had preach't my two last ser-  
mons: all his answers are agreeable to what I had delivered before in the  
pulpit; but of some incidental things I do ἐπέχειν."—R. B.

<sup>10</sup> This is upon the authority of Seward's Anecdotes, vol. ii.



CHAP. III. 1692. playfulness which appears in these as well as his other writings, and which is said to have pervaded his conversation, it may be objected, that such pleasantry was ill suited to sermons : it should, however, be recollected, that these compositions, although delivered from the pulpit, were not the instructions of the Sabbath, but popular lectures, of which the doctrines of revealed religion formed no part ; while the arrogance and ignorance of which he convicts the atheistical pretenders, must be allowed to be legitimate objects of scorn and contempt.

Merits of the  
lectures.

Such was the auspicious commencement of *Boyle's Lecture*, an institution to which we owe some of the ablest theological pieces in our language ; among them we may mention Clarke's 'Discourse on the Being and Attributes of God,' Newton's 'Dissertation on the Prophecies,' and Van Mildert's 'Historical Account of Infidelity : ' but though Bentley has had these divines among his successors, as well as Gastrell, Bradford, Blackall, and Jortin, yet the reputation of the first essay has been eclipsed by none. The applause with which it was received was loud and universal. One solitary attempt was made to resist his reasoning on the immateriality of the soul, in a pamphlet by Mr. Henry Layton ; a feeble piece, which attracted no attention at the time, and deserves our notice only as being the first of the innumerable tracts published against Bentley in the course of his career<sup>11</sup>.

Bentley's  
first oppo-  
nent.

<sup>11</sup> The title is, *Observations upon a Sermon intituled 'A Confutation of Atheism from the Faculties of the Soul,' alias, 'Matter and Motion cannot think ;' preached April 4, 1692 : by way of Refutation :* small 4to. A manuscript note, in the copy in the Bodleian Library, says, "The author of these tracts, and some others, particularly one called 'Observations upon Dr. Nichol's Book, &c. is Henry Layton, of Rawdon in Yorkshire, Esq.' Bentley had little to fear from a writer who expressed himself thus : "That all were the works of God, I am ready to grant and maintain, as well as



As Boyle's bequest allowed the same lecturer to be reappointed, it was natural to expect that Bentley would have preached the following year; but the fact is, that Dr. Kidder, Bishop of Bath and Wells, succeeded; being appointed at the urgent instance of Sir John Rotheram, who prevailed upon the other trustees, although with much reluctance, to comply<sup>12</sup>. Evelyn appears to have been concerned at this step, which he considered unjust towards the person who had so admirably fulfilled the views of the founder: Bentley himself, however, did not evince any chagrin or dissatisfaction.

CHAP. III.  
1692.

Bishop  
Kidder  
succeeds.

Before his year's task was completed, he had received, as the solid reward of his labours, a prebend in Worcester cathedral. We learn from Burnet that King William at this period left the church patronage to the disposal of Queen Mary<sup>13</sup>; and as she was in the habit of consulting Bishop Stillingfleet upon all ecclesiastical subjects, he probably had not much difficulty in procuring for his chaplain a stall in his own diocese. This preferment must have been highly gratifying to our young divine (who had just taken priest's orders) not only as securing a liberal independence, the first wish of a scholar, but because it retained him in the society of his patron: his time of residence was fixed for the months when the Bishop was at Worcester.

October 8,  
Bentley  
Prebendary  
of Worces-  
ter.

The great reputation which he had now achieved was not unattended with its usual consequences, envy and detraction. Of this we find an instance as early as the present period. He had, it seems, obtained

Excites  
envy.

he; but in his design to prove God's providence and creation by the immateriality of human souls, I judge he hath taken the wrong sow by the ear."

<sup>12</sup> *Evelyn's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 35. Dec. 14, 1692.

<sup>13</sup> Burnet's Hist. of his own Times.



CHAP. III. 1692. some credit by deciphering a difficult Carthaginian inscription. Adrian Beverland, who has been already mentioned as the executor of Isaac Vossius and the friend of Bernard, suspected that he had copied it from some papers of his, and communicated this belief, among others, to Bentley's brother-chaplain Hody. The subject is not worth investigating; for Beverland soon discovered that he had been doing injustice to Bentley, and that the suspicion was utterly unfounded: he desires therefore, in a letter to Dr. Charlett the Master of University College<sup>14</sup>, that this may be explained to Hody and his friends; among whom he specifies Creech, the well known editor of Lucretius<sup>15</sup>. The envy produced by Bentley's endowments was increased by a certain  
 His haughtiness. haughtiness discoverable in his conversation and demeanour. There is a traditional anecdote, current during his life time, which, whatever be its foundation, shows the opinion prevalent upon this subject. It is that a nobleman dining at his patron's, and happening to sit next to Bentley, was so much struck with his information and powers of argument that he remarked to the Bishop after dinner, 'my Lord, that chaplain of your's is certainly a very extraordinary man:' 'Yes,' said Stillingfleet, 'had he but the gift of humility, he would be the most extraordinary man in Europe'<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> This letter, dated London, Sept. 1692, is in the Bodleian.

<sup>15</sup> Creech had been of Wadham College, and was then fellow of All Souls. He published an English translation of Manilius in 1696, and was prevented from giving an edition of that poet by its having been undertaken by Bentley.

<sup>16</sup> This anecdote is told by Mr. John Nichols, (*Gentleman's Magazine*, Nov. 1779,) on the authority of Dr. Owen. A rather different version of it is found in a pamphlet written against Bentley in 1721, by some bitter enemy: "Pray, Master, tell him of another great Bishop, who made this shrewd observation upon a certain forward young man, that he might in



It was in the summer of 1692, that Bentley com-  
 menced a correspondence with John George Grævius  
 of Utrecht, the most distinguished scholar of his time,  
 which continued with little intermission until his  
 death. All their letters are preserved, and are highly  
 interesting from the characters of the writers, the  
 pleasing style of their Latinity, and their free opinions  
 upon the literary topics of the day. The correspon-  
 dence originated thus: Bentley in examining Gevar-  
 tius's packet of papers relative to Manilius, lent to  
 him by Sir Edward Sherburn, discovered some mat-  
 ters which interested him, particularly a dissertation  
*de Vita Fl. Theodori Mallii Consulis* from the pen of  
 Albertus Rubenius, and two letters from Grævius to  
 the same person. This Rubenius was a man of great  
 learning and no inconsiderable rank, being a mem-  
 ber of the Council of Government in the Spanish  
 Netherlands. Grævius when a young man had en-  
 joyed his intimacy, and received from him on his  
 death-bed the charge of giving to the world his trea-  
 tise *de Re Vestiaria*, which he accordingly published  
 from the scattered papers of his friend. The occa-  
 sion of the other essay appears to have been this:  
 Gevartius, one of his intimates, had projected an  
 edition of Manilius, a poet whose age is in some un-  
 certainty, owing to the total silence of all ancient  
 writers respecting him: the prevailing opinion was  
 that of Scaliger and Salmasius, which placed him in  
 the time of Augustus; and this the internal evidence  
 appears to confirm: others, among whom we may  
 mention Faber and Vossius, brought him down as low  
 as the reign of the Emperor Theodosius. Gevart  
 fancied that he had identified the individual, and  
 that Manilius the poet was no other than Fl. Mallius

CHAP. III.  
 1692.  
 Correspondence with  
 Grævius.

Albertus  
 Rubenius.

time become a great man, if God gave him the grace of humility." *Letter to the Reverend Master of Trinity College in Cambridge, 1721, p. 13*



CHAP. III. Theodorus, who was Consul 400 years after the Augustan period, and is the subject of a panegyrical poem of Claudian. This notion, being repugnant to all just criticism, and grounded upon the slender circumstance of Claudian recording the writings of his hero upon the Stoical hypothesis of the creation, (while no mention occurs of the two characteristic features of Manilius, his poetry, and his astrology) made but few converts : it was maintained however with obstinacy by Gevart ; who, having in vain recommended it in his publications, resumed the argument in his inedited papers, intended as notes to an edition of Manilius which he did not live to publish. Rubenius, in order to divert his friend from an hypothesis which procured him no credit, wrote the treatise *de Mallio*, which remained unknown among Gevart's papers till it was discovered by Bentley, who was accidentally enabled to detect its author<sup>17</sup>. Grævius having been the editor of his other writings, Bentley suggested that this also should be offered to him for publication : accordingly, with the permission of Sir Edward Sherburn, he imparted the matter to him ; inquiring at the same time whether an opinion expressed in his two letters just mentioned, which seemed favourable to Gevart's notion of the age of Manilius, was sincere ; whether he still continued in the same mind ; and, if so, by what arguments he could maintain such an hypothesis. I have been thus minute in explaining the commencement of this correspondence, from the necessity which there will shortly be of recalling the reader's attention to it, as being made the ground of an unjust aspersion upon Bentley's character. Grævius in his reply explained

<sup>17</sup> This treatise had no name affixed to it : but Bentley found a letter in the same handwriting, signed A. R. the contents of which showed that the writer was Albertus Rubenius. Preface to *Dissert. on Phal.* p. xiv.



that the opinion about Manilius was one expressed by him in his youth too hastily, upon hearing some arguments of Gevart's which pleased him at the moment; that he had since not only discarded that theory, but had lately condemned it in an academical speech. The dissertation of Rubenius he gladly and thankfully undertook to publish. But the reader of his letters is most struck with the cordial joy felt by Grævius at opening an intercourse with a scholar, of whom he had conceived so exalted an opinion. He had just been perusing the Epistle to Mill with extreme admiration, and perceived at once that the author was destined to hold the very highest place among the learned of his age. This he always expressed as his deliberate judgment; and, regarding the cause of classical learning with parental fondness, he was overjoyed to find one who promised to be such a powerful supporter. Grævius's age was double that of Bentley: the intercourse, which began with topics of learning, ripened in its progress into the cordiality of friendship: and the zealous, candid, and warm-hearted disposition of the veteran scholar displayed in his correspondence attracts as much regard as his learning.

Bentley transmitted to Utrecht the essay of Rubenius, and along with it a copy of Stephens' edition of Cicero's Philosophical works, containing in the margin various readings from an ancient manuscript. This belonged to Dr. John Moore, Bishop of Norwich, who had offered through Bentley to send a copy of the various readings to Grævius, then employed on an edition of Cicero; and, upon his embracing the offer, permitted him to have the volume itself; promising him, at the same time, some other *subsidia* for the work, which his noble library supplied. This prelate, who will hereafter engage much of our

CHAP. III.  
1692.

Jan.  
1692-93.



CHAP. III.  
1693.

attention, had not only made that extensive and valuable collection of books, which now forms so considerable a part of the University Library at Cambridge, but with a truly liberal spirit was always ready to give the use of them to scholars. He seems early to have patronized and encouraged the subject of these memoirs, and to have allowed him the free use of his library.

Grævius's  
edition of  
Callima-  
chus.

An edition of Callimachus had been undertaken by Grævius's only son, a young man of great promise, who had begun to print it when he was carried off by a consumption. This work his father determined to complete: a full commentary upon the poet had been promised for the edition by Baron Spanheim: and Bentley was desired in Grævius's first letter to add his contributions: a request to which he acceded promptly and handsomely, sending at the same time two or three specimens of his corrections: he undertook also to give a new collection of the Fragments of Callimachus arranged under proper heads, and comprising above double the number discovered by all preceding editors; a bold promise, but one which was more than realized in the performance.

Bentley un-  
dertakes the  
Fragments.

Joshua  
Barnes.

He was engaged about this time in a correspondence with a scholar of a very opposite character, Mr. Joshua Barnes of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. This personage, whose peculiarities have occasioned his name to be seldom mentioned without a smile, had been pursuing his course for many years in different walks of literature with great perseverance and incredible want of judgment: as a poet, historian, orator, and critic, he is equally unfortunate, and equally satisfied with his own performances. He was then employed upon his edition of Euripides, a work for which he certainly wanted most of the essential qualifications; but for the demerits of which he has



received harsher treatment than he deserves from recent scholars, who have forgotten how little had been done before his time towards the correction and illustration of that tragedian. Hearing that Bentley considered as spurious the six Epistles attributed to Euripides, he wrote to ask him the grounds of that opinion. Bentley's answer, while it avowed his own belief that they were nothing but the fabrications of some sophist, expressed his despair of bringing any arguments to convince those who did not discover it themselves; and he begs therefore that Barnes, 'when he confutes the opinion of Meursius' against them, as he threatened, 'would not name him; for he did not pretend to *assert*, but only to *believe*, that they were fabrications.' He mentions in a lively and playful strain a few particulars of the internal evidence, which will make most readers of his opinion: for instance, the poet's writing to Archelaus, refusing a large sum of money, and begging instead the lives and liberty of some noble persons condemned to die: his letter to Sophocles, his rival, who was then serving as a general upon an expedition, condoling with him upon the loss of some plays by shipwreck! "Our sham author," says Bentley, "had forgot Sophocles's errand; that he was now the general, and not the poet; and that if he had had some plays beforehand, he would not have carried them to the war." Again, Sophocles is made to entrust the inspection of his domestic affairs, during his absence from Athens, to his rival; and Euripides, after his own emigration to Macedonia, writes to Cephisophon, the very person whose intimacy with his wife had produced the ridicule and vexations which drove him from his country; the subject of the letter is to beg, that he will 'justify his leaving Athens' against the calumnies of his enemies; and he refuses the offer of some money,

CHAP. III.  
 1693.

Epistles of  
 Euripides.

Bentley's  
 opinion of  
 them.



CHAP. III. saying, that he could not desire riches now that his  
1693. dear mother (Clito the herb-woman) was dead!!

Barnes's  
behaviour.

These arguments, irresistible as they may appear, produced no effect in shaking the opinion of Barnes in favour of the pretended epistles. But such was the discourtesy and even rudeness of his behaviour, that I feel almost ashamed to record it. Instead of expressing either publicly or privately his thanks for the information he had received, or taking any other notice of it, he published the epistles as an integral part of the tragedian's works; and having made a sort of reply to Bentley's objections, declared, that to doubt their being the genuine work of Euripides was a proof of impudence or want of judgment, *perfrictæ frontis, aut judicii imminuti*<sup>18</sup>. Those who have adopted an idea that Bentley's style was usually arrogant or contemptuous, may suppose that his letter had contained some offence of this sort: but the original happens to be preserved, and has lately come to light<sup>19</sup>; its character is the very reverse of offensive; it is courteous, good-humoured, and even flattering to Barnes. For the behaviour of the latter I should wish to discover some excuse, but am unable to give any better account of it than that his prejudices in favour of the exiled King might possibly make him regard with contempt the opinions and scholarship of a person patronised by the Deliverer's government.

<sup>18</sup> See Barnes' *Vita Euripidis*, § 28, and his preliminary remarks on the Epistles, vol. ii. p. 523, ed. 1694; in Beck's reprint of Barnes, vol. ii. p. 498.

<sup>19</sup> This Epistle had come into the possession of — Holmes, Esq. by whom it was presented to the British Museum in the year 1820. It is now printed in the *Museum Criticum*, vol. ii. p. 405.



CHAPTER IV.

*Bentley made Keeper of the King's library—Second course of Boyle's Lectures—Commences printing an edition of Philostratus—Abandons it to Olearius—Grævius's dedication to Bentley—Controversy on ancient and modern learning—Sir William Temple—Wotton's Reflections—Temple's opinion of Æsop and Phalaris—Bentley promises to confute him—Dr. Aldrich, Dean of Christ Church—Hon. Charles Boyle—Undertakes to publish Phalaris—Bennett, the bookseller, applies to Bentley for a manuscript—Causes a quarrel—Boyle makes a reflection upon Bentley—Rejects his explanation—Archbishop Tenison—Lambeth degree—Evelyn—Pepys—Bentley chaplain to the King—Rector of Hartlebury—Apartments in St. James's palace—Earl of Marlborough—State of the Library—Cambridge University Press renovated by Bentley's agency—Takes the degree of D.D.—His Public Act—Commencement sermon.*

UPON the death of Henry de Justel, Keeper of the Royal library at St. James's, it was the particular wish of Bishop Stillingfleet and Bentley's other friends, that he should fill that situation, for which his knowledge of books eminently qualified him; and to effect this object, the greatest difficulties were overcome. Mr. Edmund Gibson, afterwards Bishop of London, was a candidate, supported by the interest of Archbishop Sharpe: the place was actually given to Mr. Thynne; but with this gentleman a compromise was effected, Bentley engaging to pay him 130*l.* out of the salary, which was 200*l.* a year, during his lifetime<sup>1</sup>. This transaction, which seems to have been no secret at the time, will account for a delay in filling the vacancy. Justel died in September 1693; Bentley had his appointment under the King's sign manual on the 23d of December: but his patent,

CHAP. IV.  
1692-93.

Bentley  
made  
keeper of  
the King's  
library.

<sup>1</sup> These circumstances I discover from two manuscript letters in the Bodleian, one from Gibson, the other from Hopkins, prebendary of Worcester, both addressed to Dr. Charlett.



CHAP. IV. constituting him for life Keeper of all the King's  
 1694. libraries in England, was dated on the 6th of April  
 following: during this interval Queen Mary, who  
 took the sole interest in such matters, directed a cata-  
 logue of the library to be made by Postlethwaite and  
 Wright, the respective masters of St. Paul's and St.  
 James's schools<sup>2</sup>.

His second  
 course of  
 Boyle's lec-  
 ture.

In the mean time Bentley was summoned by the  
 trustees of Boyle's Lecture, to preach the course for  
 the year 1694<sup>3</sup>. His subject was a defence of Christ-  
 ianity against the objections of infidels<sup>4</sup>. That the  
 eight sermons delivered on this occasion have never  
 been published, is a matter of serious regret: nor is  
 it a little surprising that he should have failed to give  
 them to the world, after the favourable reception and  
 increasing reputation of his former series; particu-  
 larly when we find their publication continually so-  
 licited for more than three years, by Mr. Evelyn, as  
 well as by Bishop Tenison. This prelate, who was  
 shortly advanced to the primacy, and whose coun-  
 tenance and support was important to all Bentley's  
 views in life, appears to have been displeased by the  
 omission; for which, indeed, we hear no apology,  
 except want of leisure to revise the discourses for the

<sup>2</sup> These matters are detailed in the Preface to *Dissert. on Phal.* p. xiv.—xix.

<sup>3</sup> There is a mistake in the list of Boyle's Lecturers, given in Nichols' *Literary Anecdotes*, vol. vi. p. 453; and in Bishop Van Mildert's preface to his *Historical Account of Infidelity*; where the Lecturer for 1694 is stated to have been Bishop Kidder.

<sup>4</sup> Evelyn, *Mem.* vol. ii. p. 39, says, that he was to pursue his former subject upon atheism. But Bentley, in his letter to Grævius, of May 25, 1694, distinctly says, that his second course of lectures was against the enemies of Christianity. Evelyn's words deserve to be cited. "Dec. 3, 1693. Mr. Bentley preached at the Tabernacle, near Golden Square. I gave my voice for him to proceed in his former subject the following year in Mr. Boyle's lecture, in which he had been interrupted by the opportunity of Sir J. Rotheram, that the Bishop of Chichester [*read* Bath and Wells] might be chosen, the year before, to the great dissatisfaction of the Bishop of Lincoln and myself. We chose Mr. Bentley again."



press <sup>5</sup>. As this was no formidable task, I can only account for the failure, by supposing that there were some additional topics which he wished to introduce, but was prevented from investigating by a succession of other occupations, until the proper season for printing had too long elapsed. In whose possession the copies are I have never been able to discover.

CHAP. IV.  
1694.

The projected editions of Philostratus and Manilius were now in a state of readiness for the printer; but the increased expense of paper and printing in England, the consequence of war and new taxes, deterred him from publishing books, which from their nature could only meet with a limited sale at home, and for the exportation of which the circumstances of the times were unfavourable <sup>6</sup>. Accordingly, he designed to print his Philostratus at Leipsic, and sent thither the early part of his text and notes for that purpose. But when he received the first sheet as a specimen, he was disgusted with the meanness of the printing, and resolved that his labours should not come forth to the world in so unseemly a dress <sup>7</sup>. Indeed, it may be remarked that Bentley always placed a high value upon typographical elegance, and was more fastidious upon this head, than might have been ex-

Commences printing an edition of Philostratus.

<sup>5</sup> He says to Evelyn, in a letter of Feb. 22, 1694—95: "I suppose nothing will reinstate me fully in his Grace of Canterbury's favour, but publishing my sermons; which I could not yet do, for the bustle and distraction that new housekeeping and furnishing brings along with it: but I hope in a week more to have a day or two of leisure to look on them; and if I once begin, 'twill be a short business." He tells Grævius, in Nov. 1695, that they are actually in the press. As late as Jan. 12, 1696—97, he renews his promise to Evelyn: "I am now upon a job for our friend Mr. Wotton [the Dissertation on Phalaris and Æsop]; then I proceed to pay my debts to you by printing my sermons." The copies of these sermons are said, in Kippis's *Biographia Britannica*, to be in existence: this was in 1778, in the life-time of Dr. R. Bentley, of Nailstone, who inherited his uncle's papers.

<sup>6</sup> Pref. to *Dissert. on Phal.* p. lxiii.

<sup>7</sup> Letter to Grævius, of May 15, 1694.



CHAP. IV.  
1694.

Abandons it  
to Olearius.

pected from one who so well understood the intrinsic merits of a book. After some time he abandoned altogether the view of this publication, as Professor Wolf remarks, ‘to the joy of Olearius of Leipsic, and of nobody else.’ To this German, who undertook to publish the two *Philostrati*, he sent part of his apparatus, the collation of a manuscript belonging to New College *De Vitis Sophistarum*, and that of a Baroccian manuscript, both which he had made during his residence at Oxford. The edition of Olearius, which appeared in 1709, contains Bentley’s notes as far as p. 11, taken from the first sheet just mentioned, which had been circulated as a specimen<sup>8</sup>.

Grævius’s  
dedication  
to Bentley.

In the early part of 1694 the tract of Rubenius, already mentioned, was published by Grævius, who prefixed to it an epistle of dedication to Bentley, as the person to whom the world was indebted for its discovery, accompanied with an account of the author and his work. In this epistle the literary patriarch pronounced publicly the same exalted opinion of his new friend’s learning and genius, which he had before expressed in private; and speaking in the name of all scholars with whom he was acquainted, he declared the expectations raised by his first performance to be such as surpassed all example and belief.

Controversy  
on Ancient  
and Modern  
Learning.

In the midst of these honours and encouragements, Bentley became accidentally involved in that dispute which constitutes so peculiar a feature in his biography, the controversy on the letters of Phalaris. As this piece of literary story is connected with the question then agitated upon the comparative merits of ancient and modern learning, it may not be disagreeable to the reader to have a short account of a

<sup>8</sup> See Olearius *Pref. ad Philostr.* p. x. xi. Also Fabricius *Bibl. Gr.* tom. v. p. 555.



discussion, which for several years occupied so large a share of public attention. CHAP. IV.  
1694.

This dispute concerning the rival pretensions of the ancients and moderns, had its origin in France, where about the year 1688, the lively and witty Fontenelle, the author of the 'Plurality of Worlds,' affixed to his Pastoral Poetry a dissertation, in which he claimed for the moderns a general superiority over the illustrious names of antiquity, making his principal stand upon the ground least favourable to his own clients, that of genius. The same hypothesis found other advocates among the French savans, particularly Perrault, who in his 'Parallel between the Ancients and Moderns,' bribed the assent and applause of his countrymen, by matching some individual Frenchman against each of the most illustrious ancients<sup>9</sup>. These extravagances were not likely to be long unresisted. Sir William Temple, illustrious as a statesman, and likewise the most popular writer of that age, who had long retired from public business to the enjoyment of literary ease, came forward as the indignant champion of the ancients. In his 'Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning,' which first appeared in 1692, he not only combats the positions of Fontenelle and Perrault, whom he charges with 'sufficiency, the worst composition out of the pride and ignorance of mankind,' but flies himself into the opposite extreme, and boldly maintains the intellectual superiority of former times in every department; not merely in the results of genius and taste, but in the state of philosophy and knowledge, whether physical, moral, or mechanical. Sir William's style of writing is elegant and polished, and his conceptions are neatly

Sir William  
Temple.

<sup>9</sup> For instance, Balsac was opposed to Cicero; Boileau to Horace; Voiture to Pliny; and Corneille to Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides combined.



CHAP. IV. expressed; but at the present day, when the voice of  
1694. fashion no longer influences our judgment, and his productions are made to rest upon their own merits, we cannot avoid remarking, that neither his reasoning is strict, nor his views profound; and that he is far too dogmatical and uncompromising to be a safe guide for the opinions of others. Moreover, in the Essay of which we are speaking, he shows great credulity upon certain obscure topics of history; his grounds are frequently insecure, and there appears a determination to regard only one side of the question, which savours more of a school declamation, than of a calm and philosophical inquiry. The piece, however, was read and admired, and being translated into French, turned the tide of opinion in the Academy against the moderns; it was applauded by Boileau and Racine, and forced Perrault himself into a formal recantation of his heresy<sup>10</sup>. Notwithstanding this triumph, the manner in which Temple had disposed of the question by no means satisfied reflecting persons. He had displayed a disposition to undervalue the labours and discoveries of the moderns, particularly the philosophers, which outraged every fair principle of comparison; in some material departments of knowledge, his own information was too superficial to allow his judgment to have much weight; and, in contrast to his French antagonists, he showed a disinclination to admit the merits of his own countrymen; some of the most illustrious of whom, as Shakspeare, Milton, and Newton, he did not condescend to name. Besides, the only point which his arguments, if sound, tended to establish,

<sup>10</sup> Sir William refers to these circumstances with great satisfaction in the Appendix to his Essay, entitled, '*Some Thoughts upon reviewing the Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning.*' Temple's Works, Vol. III. p. 437.



was the uncomfortable doctrine of the degeneracy of the human species. In this state of things, Bentley's early friend, Wotton, who was now chaplain to the Earl of Nottingham, wrote a book entitled 'Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning,' which examines and weighs the arguments of the rival advocates, and undertakes to limit the departments where superiority may respectively be claimed. Wotton executed his work ably and judiciously: wide as the proposed range is, his inquiry proceeds with calmness and caution into every part, and evinces not only more candour, but a more extensive acquaintance with the topics under discussion, than had previously been exhibited in this controversy. This must have made his 'Reflections' very edifying, after the loose and declamatory tracts which preceded them, and even now renders their perusal interesting and useful. Though professing the character of an umpire, he more frequently resists the arguments of Sir W. Temple; and this he does in the most efficacious manner, by destroying the premises upon which they are built, by giving a just view of the authorities for the alleged vast acquisitions of the ancient sages, and showing how ill they will bear the test of investigation. Of Fontenelle his opinion is, that he injured his own cause by an injudicious mode of treating it. A material object kept in view by Wotton is, to uphold the honour of the Royal Society, of whom Sir William thought very slightly, and contemptuously styled, from the original place of their meeting, the '*Men of Gresham*'<sup>11</sup>.

 CHAP. IV.  
 1694.

 Wotton's  
 Reflections.

<sup>11</sup> The following extract from a letter of Evelyn to his friend Pepys, dated July 7, 1694, shows his opinion of Wotton and his performance;—  
 "if some kind genius had not in pity directed the most learned Mr. Wotton to give me a visit, and an inestimable present too, his *Reflections on the Ancient and Modern Learning*; which, in recognition of yours, I should



## CHAP. IV.

1694.

Temple's  
opinion of  
Æsop and  
Phalaris.

Among other arguments for the decay of human wit and learning, the Baronet had ventured an assertion, 'that the oldest books extant were still the best in their kind;' and adduced as his instances, what he believed to be the most ancient prose books written by profane authors, the Fables of Æsop and the Epistles of Phalaris. This monstrous preference was, unhappily for his credit and peace of mind, maintained in the following eloquent and elaborate passage :

"As the first (Æsop) has been agreed by all ages since, for the greatest master in his kind, and all others of that sort have been but imitations of his original; so I think the Epistles of Phalaris to have more race, more spirit, more force of wit and genius, than any others I have ever seen, either ancient or modern. I know several learned men (or that usually pass for such, under the name of critics) have not esteemed them genuine, and Politian with some others have attributed them to Lucian: but I think he must have little skill in painting, that cannot find out this to be an original; such diversity of passions upon such variety of actions and passages of life and government, such freedom of thought, such boldness of expression, such bounty to his friends, such scorn of his enemies, such honour of learned men, such esteem of good, such knowledge of life, such contempt of death, with such fierceness of nature and cruelty of revenge, could never be represented but by him that possessed them; and I esteem Lucian to have been no more capable of writing than of acting what Phalaris did. In all one writ, you find the scholar or the sophist; and in all the other, the tyrant and the commander." *Temple's Works*, Vol. III. p. 463.

Bentley  
undertakes  
to confute  
Temple.

While Wotton was employed upon his publication, Bentley happening to converse with him upon Temple's Essay, told him that the two works which this

have sent you, but that I was confident you must ere this have seen it, and been entertained with as much delight and satisfaction as an universally learned, and indeed extraordinary person, is able to give the most refined taste. This is he whom I have sometimes mentioned to you, for one of the miracles of this age, for his early and vast comprehension. Set him down, then, in your Albo, among the Gales and the Bentleys, as you will certainly do as soon as you know him." *Pepys's Correspondence*, p. 137.



veteran had pronounced the oldest and the best in the world, were in truth neither old nor good ; that he could prove the present collection of Æsopian fables not to be Æsop's ; and that the Epistles upon which such extravagant praises were heaped, were not the production of Phalaris, but an impudent and clumsy forgery of later times. Wotton immediately engaged his friend in a promise to write the arguments for this opinion, to be published in his book then in the press. Bentley's sentiments about the Epistles of Phalaris had been deliberately formed, as appears from his having avowed them in his Appendix to Malelas, and in his correspondence with Joshua Barnes ; but his promise to Wotton was not executed at that time : independently of a disposition to procrastinate, he was then occupied with his second course of Boyle's lectures, and his mind was given to other literary objects : he was besides under the necessity of leaving London and his books in the month of May, to keep his residence at Worcester : and thus Wotton's publication appeared without any notice of the Tyrant or the Fabulist. The circumstance which first drew our critic into this memorable controversy was purely accidental, and distinct from his friend's undertaking.

The glowing panegyric bestowed upon Phalaris by the most popular writer of the day, naturally excited in the public a wish to become better acquainted with his inimitable Epistles ; for it happened that those compositions, now pronounced superior to every thing of the kind, either ancient or modern, were known but to very few even among the readers of the classics, and were confined to the small circle of critical scholars. Dr. Aldrich, the Dean of Christ Church, a learned and excellent man, who in zeal for the honour of his college yields to none of the

Dr. Aldrich,  
 Dean of  
 Christ  
 Church.

CHAP. IV.  
 1694.



CHAP. IV. eminent characters who have presided over that society, made it a practice to employ some of his best scholars in preparing new editions of classical works; and he used to present a copy of one of these publications as a new-year's gift to every young man in his college. This mode of encouraging youthful merit, however well intended, cannot be considered judicious; and it was soon afterwards discontinued. To fix the whole attention of students upon a single piece during a great part of that season in which they ought to be acquiring an enlarged knowledge of the ancient writers, was by no means beneficial to his young editors; and to expose to criticism the premature efforts of undergraduates, whose age made it hardly possible for them to possess knowledge or judgment adequate to their editorial task, was unfair both to themselves and to the society. Nevertheless, such a public distinction unavoidably became an object of ambition. The book selected at this time for the Christ Church publication was the highly praised Phalaris; and the Honourable Charles Boyle was fixed upon as its editor. This gentleman, brother to the Earl of Orrery, had carried with him to college a creditable share of classical knowledge, and much taste for those pursuits, for which he acknowledged himself indebted to his late tutor Dr. Gale, the Dean of York<sup>12</sup>. His attention to study and his pleasing

Hon. Chas.  
Boyle.

<sup>12</sup> "I am glad of this opportunity of mentioning the worthy Dean of York, and of paying my public acknowledgments to him for the particular kindness and favours I received from him while I was under his care. The foundation of all the little knowledge I have in these matters was laid by him, which I gratefully own." *Boyle's Examination*, p. 59.

It may be considered among the curious anomalies which occur in Bentley's life, that in his great controversy with the distinguished wits of Oxford, his professed antagonist was one who had derived his instructions from the late Greek Professor of the sister University; and that Sir W. Temple, on whose behalf the Oxonian war against Bentley was avowedly carried on, was not only himself a Cambridge man, who had once been



behaviour rendered him a favourite with the society, and particularly with its Head, who had lately dedicated to him a system of Logic drawn up for his particular use. On his first admission at Christ Church, he was under the tuition of the celebrated Atterbury. The union of high birth and academical merit naturally caused him to be regarded as an honour to his college, and interested all its members in his favour.

CHAP. IV.  
1694.

*A letter to Bentley for a review of Atterbury's Logic.*

It was about the middle of 1693, that Mr. Boyle turned his attention to the Epistles of Phalaris, assisted by Mr. John Freind, one of the junior students, afterwards the celebrated physician, who officiated as 'director of his studies,' or, in modern phrase, as his private tutor. For the service of the projected edition it was desirable to have the collation of such manuscript copies as were accessible; and one of these, of no great age or value, belonged to the library at St. James's. Accordingly Mr. Boyle wrote to his bookseller, Thomas Bennett, whose sign was the Half Moon in St. Paul's Church Yard, simply directing him 'to get this manuscript collated.' From his inexperience, he was not aware that in all libraries a nice and necessary caution is observed regarding their manuscript treasures, and that commissions of such a nature are not usually entrusted to a bookseller. The conduct of this Bennett produced such singular consequences, and involved in literary and personal discussions so many eminent characters, that we are under the necessity of examining it with minute accuracy. To Mr. Boyle's request he paid no attention for some time; and when renewed applications roused him to exertion, such was his ignorance,

Undertakes to publish Phalaris.

Bennett the bookseller.

Representative in Parliament for that University, but the very work containing his sentiments respecting Phalaris and Æsop, the origin of the dispute, was dedicated by him '*Almæ Matri Cantabrigiensi.*'



CHAP. IV. that he sent a collator with a printed Phalaris to Sion  
 1694. College, imagining, as it seems, that and the King's  
 Applies to Bentley for a manu- library to be the same<sup>13</sup>. His next step was to ask  
 script. the assistance of Mr. Bentley, who occasionally visited  
 his shop, judging him likely to have interest to pro-  
 cure a loan of the manuscript; but so little zeal did  
 he show to oblige his Christ Church customer, that  
 he did not go to solicit the favour, but only men-  
 tioned it when he casually saw him. To the first  
 request, which seems to have been in the beginning  
 of 1694, Bentley answered at once, that he should be  
 happy in an opportunity of obliging Mr. Boyle, a  
 young man related to the illustrious founder of his  
 lecture, and 'that he would help him to the book.'  
 This was some time before he had the custody of the  
 library; but it was afterwards noticed, that he might  
 have made interest with the persons employed upon  
 the catalogue, whom he sometimes accompanied and  
 assisted in their work. However it was not reason-  
 able to expect any uncommon exertions to serve a  
 gentleman who seemed himself to consider the matter  
 too trifling for any application to him, either by letter  
 or through a friend. But the real cause of offence  
 was a conversation between him and the bookseller,  
 upon the latter asking confidentially his opinion of  
 the work on which Mr. Boyle was employed: Bentley  
 told him that 'he need not be afraid of undertaking  
 it, since the great names of those that recommended  
 it would ensure its sale; but that the book was a  
 spurious one, and unworthy of a new edition.' Ben-  
 nett receiving from Oxford fresh applications for the  
 collation, in order to excuse himself, laid the blame

Occasions a  
 quarrel.

<sup>13</sup> Account given by Gibson, the collator, copied in a letter from the Rev. Edm. Gibson, afterwards Bishop of London, his relation, to Dr. Charlett, among the Ballard manuscripts in the Bodleian.



upon the new librarian, whom he asserted that he had long solicited in vain, and who had besides spoken with disparagement and contempt both of the book and its editors. This representation, being implicitly believed by Boyle and his friends, convinced them that Bentley was behaving uncourteously, from hostility to a work which he was known to consider as not being the genuine production of the tyrant whose name it bore. What ensued, confirmed them in this opinion. After another and more urgent letter, the bookseller, though he still gave himself no trouble respecting the object, happening to meet Bentley in the street, renewed his request for the manuscript; and was answered that 'he should have it as soon as he sent for it to his lodgings:' it was, in fact, delivered to his messenger on the same day, along with an injunction that no time should be lost in making the collation, as he was shortly going out of town, and must replace the book in the library before his departure<sup>14</sup>. As he granted this favour the very first time that it was asked after he had the custody of the library, nothing but a misrepresentation of facts could have led people to charge him with uncourteous or disobliging conduct. The time of his leaving London to keep his residence at Worcester was approaching, and as he was to set off early on a Monday morning, he applied to Bennett the preceding Saturday, for the restoration of the book; which had been put into his hand from five to nine days before. The shortest of these periods was more than sufficient for the completion of the task; but it was not until almost the last moment that this trust-worthy agent sent the book to Gibson, a person who obtained his livelihood as a corrector of the press,

<sup>14</sup> This is positively denied by Bennett: but the fact is indisputably proved to be as Bentley stated it, by the letter of Gibson, the collator, mentioned in a preceding note.



CHAP. IV. with orders to collate it with despatch. He had not  
1694. advanced further than twenty pages, when a message arrived from the bookseller that it must be immediately returned, 'as the library-keeper waited for it in the shop:' his solicitation for longer time obtained only a permission to keep it till the evening; to a further delay Bentley refused to consent, not choosing to risk its safety during his absence from town. There still, however, remained sufficient time for a competent person to have finished the collation: but at nine o'clock that evening when the manuscript was returned, only forty of the 148 epistles were despatched. It was the care of Bennett to give his employer such a representation of this matter, as should confirm his suspicion of some discourtesy personally directed against himself. Mr. Boyle had already expressed his belief of this being the fact: and to create such a quarrel as should preclude explanation between the parties, appeared the best mode of concealing his own neglect of the commission. Besides, the numerous inquiries made upon the subject soon discovered to this sagacious tradesman his interest in siding with a powerful literary party<sup>15</sup>.

Such is the state of the facts, as it appears from a careful examination of the many tedious discussions respecting this much talked of but trivial affair, which has, by a strange accident, found a place in our literary history. To Bentley, had the transaction been fairly stated, not a shadow of blame could be attached; and Boyle was censurable only for giving implicit credit to the representations of his agent. To have gratuitously affronted a promising young scholar, of

<sup>15</sup> This detail is drawn from the following publications, '*Boyle's Examination*,' p. 2—22. '*Bentley's Dissertation*,' Pref. p. i.—xxxvii. '*Short Account of Dr. Bentley's Justice and Humanity*,' &c. and '*Answer to a late Book written against the very learned Dr. Bentley*.'



a name and family which he held in veneration, was inconsistent with Bentley's character: he would rather have rejoiced in an opportunity of obliging him, and, if properly applied to, would undoubtedly have made the collation himself. But a notion prevailed at Christ Church that an affront was intended both for Phalaris and his patrons; and this it was determined to resent. Possibly, the Tory politics prevalent in that society might have had their share in hurrying on a quarrel with a scholar in the opposite interest.

No more was said upon the subject till the appearance of Boyle's Phalaris, when in the preface there was found the following sentence: '*collatas etiam curavi usque ad Epist. XL. cum MSto. in Bibliotheca Regia, cujus mihi copiam ulteriorem Bibliothecarius, PRO SINGULARI SUA HUMANITATE, negavit.*' Of this volume about a hundred copies were given to the young men of Christ Church, and many others were dispersed as presents: one of these Bentley saw for the first time on the 26th of January. Surprised by the reflection upon his character, he wrote instantly to Boyle, explaining the real state of the case, and assuring him that his suspicions of intended discourtesy were unfounded, and the very reverse of the truth. He expected that, upon this assurance, the offensive leaf would have been cancelled, apprehending that the copies were not yet in the hands of the booksellers. This, it seems, was a mistake; for the book, though not advertised, had really been published. There were, however, other modes, by which the offence might have been honourably retracted, and all further misunderstanding prevented. But after two days' consideration, it was determined to reject the pacific overture; and Boyle coolly replied, 'that what Mr. Bentley had said in his own behalf *might* be true, but that the bookseller had represented

CHAP. IV.  
1694.

Jan. 1,  
1694-95.  
Boyle's reflection  
upon Bentley.

Rejects his  
explanation.



CHAP. IV. 1695. the matter quite otherwise, and to him he was advised to prefer his complaint. He added, that if this account had been received before, he should have considered of it; but that after the publication, it was too late to interpose; and Mr. Bentley might seek his redress in any method he pleased.' It is hardly possible to justify the conduct of Boyle and his advisers, in first resenting a supposed affront upon *ex parte* evidence, and in afterwards rejecting an explanation, offered in conciliatory terms, by a gentleman and a scholar. Bentley was now urged by his friends publicly to vindicate himself from the calumny; but good sense withheld him at the time. He knew how averse the world is to listen to complaints of a private description; and he was aware that Mr. Boyle's quarrel would be embraced by one of the most numerous and distinguished societies in the world, which it was neither his wish nor his interest to offend. He preferred, therefore, to wait till they should of their own accord make him amends, or till a suitable opportunity should occur of laying his justification before the public.

Bentley had returned to town, after four months' absence at Worcester, to complete his second course of Boyle's lectures. Shortly afterwards, on the death of Archbishop Tillotson, it was in contemplation to elevate his patron Stillingfleet to Lambeth: this appointment was greatly wished by Queen Mary, and would have been highly agreeable to the Church; but it was prevented by the Bishop's precarious health, which made him unequal to the duties of the primacy<sup>16</sup>. He had long been afflicted by the gout, which now attacked his stomach, and three months afterwards occasioned serious apprehensions for his

<sup>16</sup> Burnet's *Hist of his own Times*, vol. ii. p. 136.



life<sup>17</sup>. Accordingly Tenison, the Bishop of Lincoln, was translated to Canterbury. CHAP. IV.  
1695.

Evelyn, whose regard for Bentley showed itself in constant and zealous endeavours to promote his interests, immediately applied to the new Archbishop, his particular friend, to confer on their Boyle's lecturer the degree of Doctor of Divinity. For some reason which is not explained, the primate was averse to grant this point, even in favour of a person of such claims, supported by solicitations from such a quarter. The request, indeed, did not meet with a refusal; but Bentley, perceiving both from letters and conversation his disinclination to comply, forbore to extort the reluctant concession of a title, which he would be able shortly to obtain in the regular way from his own University<sup>18</sup>. He was at this time assisting Evelyn in the revision of his valuable work, the *'Numismata, or a Discourse on Medals, ancient and modern;'* to which many improvements and additions were made at his suggestion<sup>19</sup>. Among the distinguished persons to whose acquaintance this valuable friend had introduced him, was Mr. Pepys, formerly Secretary of the Admiralty, and President of the Royal Society, a name well known both to the history and literature of our country. Bentley, however, seems not to have obtained a very high station in his good graces: Mr. Pepys, after reading the attack upon him in the preface to Phalaris, expresses himself thus in a letter to Dr. Charlett: "I suspect Mr. Boyle is in the right; for our friend's learning (which I have a great value for) wants a little filing; and I

Archbp.  
Tenison.  
Lambeth  
degree.

Evelyn.

Pepys.

Jan. 10,  
1694-95.

<sup>17</sup> Bentley's Letter to Evelyn, Feb. 1694-95.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. Jan. 29, 1694-95.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. Feb. 15, 1694-95.



CHAP. IV. doubt not but a few such strokes as this will do it and  
 1695. him good<sup>20</sup>.”

Bentley  
chaplain to  
the King.  
Rector of  
Hartlebury.

The Bishop of Worcester recovered from his alarming fit of the gout, but was subject during the remainder of his life to severe attacks of the same disorder. Meanwhile Bentley continued to experience proofs of his approbation and kindness; through his interest he was made chaplain in ordinary to the King; and the rectory of Hartlebury, in Worcestershire, the place of the episcopal residence, was given to him to hold until his old pupil James Stillingfleet should be in full orders: this preferment, to which he was instituted Sept. 4, 1695, he retained three years<sup>21</sup>. It was about this period that he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society.

1696. At the beginning of the following year Bentley transferred his abode from the Bishop's house in Park-street, Westminster, to the librarian's lodgings in St. James's palace, which he fitted up, and commenced housekeeping. His apartments, which were very agreeable to his taste, looked into the Park, and adjoined those of the Princess Anne of Denmark. Being desirous of adding to them some small rooms overhead, Lord Marlborough, who was his neighbour, undertook to intercede in his behalf: but the result of his negociation was, that he obtained them for himself. At this Bentley rejoiced, conceiving that the great captain, having now become his debtor, would use his powerful interest to procure him a new ground-room to be built in the Park<sup>22</sup>. His desire

Apartments  
in St.  
James's Pa-  
lace.

Feb.  
1695-96.  
Earl of  
Marlbo-  
rough.

<sup>20</sup> Among the Ballard papers in the Bodleian. A letter from Edmund Gibson (afterwards Bishop of London) to Dr. Charlett, March 19, 1693-94, in the same collection, says: "Carrying your service to Mr. Pepys got me a very good dinner there, in company with Dr. Gale and Mr. Bentley."

<sup>21</sup> Communicated by the present Bishop of Worcester.

<sup>22</sup> On this subject he reasons thus, in a letter to Evelyn, Feb. 22, 1695-96:



was to obtain such an addition to the librarian's apart-ments, as would enable him to arrange and exhibit the curious part of the library in a becoming manner: for the room in which the books were then placed being inadequate, they were scattered about in extreme confusion, to the disgrace of the palace, and the mortification of the librarian. Indeed he confessed he was absolutely ashamed to show the library in its present state<sup>23</sup>. This appears to have been his motive for opposing the publication of the list of its manuscripts in the *Catalogus Librorum Manuscriptorum Magnæ Britannicæ et Hiberniæ*, the great work then printing at Oxford. Queen Mary was solicited by the Archbishop of Canterbury and others to suffer those of the royal library to be included in this national work: for so completely did she occupy the literary department of monarchy, that during her life-time it was generally called 'the Queen's library.' But Bentley having convinced her that the publication was not advisable at that time, she withheld her consent. The lamented death of this princess took away his best chance of compassing the different schemes which he meditated in favour of the library.

CHAP. IV.

1696.

State of the library.

 Dec. 26,  
1694.

We find Bentley's intercourse with Cambridge renewed at this time in a mode peculiarly honourable to himself, and beneficial to the community. The renovation of the University Press, which had con-

 Cambridge  
University  
press.

"As for the closets, to be a little paradoxical, I will tell you the good news, that I have utterly lost them: because by the loss of them my Lord Marlborough thinks himself obliged (for he has them, and yet was our solicitor to the princess) to obtain for me a new ground-room to be built into the Park contiguous to my lodgings. This will certainly be done, because at the same time he enlarges his closets, by raising a second story over this designed ground-room."

<sup>23</sup> Preface to *Dissert. on Phal.* p. lxxv. This confusion in the library is the subject of a hit at Bentley, in Swift's *Battle of the Books*.



CHAP. IV. <sup>1696.</sup>tinued in decay since the Usurpation, was projected by him, and mainly accomplished through his agency.

Renovated  
by Bentley's  
agency.

New buildings, new presses, and new types, were all requisite : the University itself being destitute of funds, a subscription for these purposes was procured principally by his exertions ; and the deficiency was made up by the Senate borrowing a thousand pounds. The task of ordering types of every description was absolutely committed to his discretion by a *grace* couched in very complimentary terms ; and the power of attorney given him on this occasion is the most unlimited that I ever recollect to have seen <sup>24</sup>. The commission was executed with promptitude and judgment : he procured to be cast in Holland those beautiful types which appear in Talbot's Horace, Kuster's Suidas, Taylor's Demosthenes, &c. That this establishment owed its renovation to his exertions, is one of the praises due to Bentley, from which envy has never ventured to derogate.

Takes the  
degree of  
D.D.

His public  
act.

In July 1696 Bentley was created Doctor of Divinity at Cambridge. As his exercise for this degree, he was appointed to keep the 'Public Act' at the Commencement <sup>25</sup> ; a theological disputation which formerly constituted the principal object of interest at that solemnity : the attention now engaged by the prize compositions of the students, used then to be directed to the skill and readiness with which the theologian overthrew the studied subtilties of his opponents. The three subjects defended by Bentley on this occasion were : 1. The Mosaic account of the creation and the deluge ; 2. The proof of divine authority by the miracles recorded in Scripture ;

<sup>24</sup> From the original documents preserved in the Registry's office ; and the *Grace-Book* of the time.

<sup>25</sup> From the *Grace-Book*.



3. The identity of the Christian and Platonic Trinity<sup>26</sup>. The respondent at this Public Act had the honour of entertaining the University and its visitors not only with his acuteness and learning, but also with a public breakfast of appropriate magnificence. It being found, however, that persons best qualified to do honour to this public solemnity were sometimes deterred by its costly accompaniment, a sumptuary law was passed about this time, prohibiting the entertainment for the future. Our new Doctor was likewise appointed to preach before the University on the Commencement Sunday. His discourse was a defence of revelation against the deists, and a proof that the Author of our Religion was the Messiah; a subject which he treated with his characteristic ability, perspicuity, and closeness of reasoning. It was printed at the time; and being added, many years afterwards, to an edition of his Boyle's Lectures, continues to be read and valued as one of the most powerful vindications of Christianity from the cavils of infidels<sup>27</sup>.

CHAP. IV.  
1696.  
Commence-  
ment Ser-  
mon.

<sup>26</sup> The questions were thus worded: "*An historia Mosaica de creatione et diluvio contineat quidquam rationi contrarium? 2. An miracula in S. Scriptura memorata arguant divinam auctoritatem? 3. An Trinitas Christiana et Platonica sit eadem?*" This is mentioned as a piece of literary news, in a letter from Edmund Gibson to Dr. Charlett, preserved in the Bodleian.

<sup>27</sup> The title is, '*Of Revelation and the Messias; a Sermon preached at the Public Commencement at Cambridge, July 5th, 1696.*'



## CHAPTER V.

*Publication of Callimachus—Additions by Spanheim and Bentley—Boyle's Lectures—Bentley's first Dissertation on Phalaris—Reply to Sir W. Temple—Literary forgeries—Opinions respecting the Epistles—Bentley proves them spurious—from Chronology—from their language—from their matter—from their late discovery—Replies to Mr. Boyle—Censures his edition—Other spurious Epistles—Reply to Barnes—Æsop's Fables—Their history—Babrius—Maximus Flanudes—Sensation produced by the Dissertation—The confederacy—Atterbury, Smalridge, R. Freind, J. Freind, Alsop—Atterbury the chief Author—Sir William Temple's mortification—His rejoinder—Swift's Tale of a Tub—Ridicules Wotton and Bentley.*

CHAP. V. DR. BENTLEY'S notes and emendations upon Callimachus, and his collection of the fragments of that poet, were drawn up, after repeated interruptions, and transmitted to Grævius for publication during the year 1696 : the last batch of fragments he sent to Utrecht on his return to town from Worcester, where he had been passing two months with the Bishop. Grævius's Callimachus appeared in the August of the following year, and presented two extraordinary specimens of Greek erudition ; differing from one another, but each constituting a monument to the fame of its author : the collection of fragments by our critic, and the diffuse commentary by Ezechiel Spanheim. The inexhaustible stores of knowledge in mythology, antiquities, and philology, which the latter exhibits, are an object of admiration ; and though he overlays the poet with his learning, yet his commentary will always be valued as a mine of information upon every subject of which it treats. The merits of Bentley's performance were different : above four hundred fragments

1696.  
Publication  
of Callima-  
chus.

Additions  
by Span-  
heim and  
Bentley.



raked together from the whole range of ancient literature, digested in order, amended and illustrated with a critical skill which had no example, presented a still greater novelty. There existed no collection of Greek fragments, which he could have taken for his model; and Valckenaer, one of the greatest scholars who have trodden in his footsteps, speaking of this collection, says, '*qua nihil in hoc genere præstantius prodiit aut magis elaboratum*'<sup>1</sup>.

In the mean time the fame of Bentley's 'Refutation of Atheism' increased both in this country and abroad: a Latin version of the lectures by Dan. Ernest Jablonski was published at Berlin; and they were translated into Dutch at the instance of Grævius, who was no less delighted with them than with the critical works of his correspondent. It had been designed that Bentley should have continued Boyle's lecturer for the third time in the year 1695. But he declined it, having resolved to devote his time to the concerns of the Royal library: he recommended, however, his friend Wotton as his substitute: but this arrangement was altered in favour of Dr. John Williams<sup>2</sup>. The ever-active friendship of Evelyn made him take measures that Bentley should preach the following year the lecture which he had so auspiciously commenced; and he believed he had obtained the consent of Archbishop Tenison; but for some reason his Grace's support was given to Mr. Francis Gastrell, the preacher of Lincoln's Inn, who became lecturer to the great mortification of Evelyn. Bentley expresses to him his own feelings on this occasion in different terms: "The person," says he, "that has the lecture, is very well qualified for the performance, and has de-

CHAP. V.  
1696.

Boyle's  
Lectures.

Jan. 12,  
1697.

<sup>1</sup> *Diatribæ*, p. 4. A. He thinks that Bentley's model was the collection of Latin Fragments by Columna, Douza, Scaliger, Rutgersius, &c.

<sup>2</sup> See Evelyn's Letter to Pepys. *Pepys' Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 141.



CHAP. V. sired it a long time. Pray be not concerned therefore  
 1697. for me, as if this was a disappointment; for I speak  
 seriously, I am glad to be excused: this year I shall  
 find myself other work sufficient."

Bentley's  
 First Disser-  
 tation on  
 Phalaris.

The fact is, that a second edition of the 'Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning' being now called for, Wotton claimed his friend's promise that he would demonstrate Phalaris's Epistles and Æsop's Fables to be spurious productions. Bentley desired to excuse himself, alleging that circumstances were altered since the promise was made; as the treatment which he had received in the preface to the Oxford Phalaris would make it impossible for him to write his dissertation without noticing the calumny propagated against him in that work. This excuse not appearing sufficient, his friend exacted the performance of the engagement<sup>3</sup>. This is his own account, which we find unequivocally corroborated by Wotton. It cannot however be supposed that Bentley's consent was very reluctant; or that he did not secretly rejoice in this fair opportunity of clearing himself from an unpleasant imputation. Far from seeing any disposition on the part of Boyle and his friends to retract the offence, he found that their story had been industriously circulated for two years, with all the additions and exaggerations with which rumour seldom fails to decorate such an anecdote, and that it was becoming seriously prejudicial to his character. Accordingly he undertook a dissertation, in the form of Letters to Mr. Wotton, of which the main object was to demonstrate that the author of 'Phalaris's Epistles' was not the Sicilian tyrant, but some sophist of a recent age; reserving to the conclusion his remarks on Boyle's edition and the personal reflection upon himself.

<sup>3</sup> Preface to *Dissertation on Phalaris*, p. xi. xii.



This essay, though afterwards eclipsed by the enlarged dissertation, is no less amusing than learned : CHAP. V.  
1697.  
 it was indeed a somewhat hasty production : yet so clearly were the arguments digested in the writer's mind, and so abundant were his sources of proof, that it contains a fair and satisfactory view of the whole question in all its bearings. Prefixed is the ill-fated paragraph of Sir William Temple, the great advocate of Phalaris and Æsop, which gave occasion to the discussion. Reply to Sir  
W. Temple. With the controversy in which Wotton was engaged he disclaims any interference ; observing that ' it was a subject so nice and delicate, and of so mixed and diffused a nature, that he was content to make the best use he could of both ancients and moderns, without venturing with him upon the hazard of a wrong comparison, or the envy of a true one <sup>4</sup>. ' Respecting the Baronet's remark, ' that some of the oldest books are the best in their kinds, ' he says, that the same had been ' observed even by some of the ancients ; but then the authors that they gave this honour to were Homer and Archilochus : but the choice of Phalaris and Æsop, as they are now extant, for the two great inimitable originals, is a piece of criticism of a peculiar complexion, and must proceed from a singularity of palate and judgment <sup>5</sup>. '

After giving some account of the fashion once prevalent, to publish compositions under the names of illustrious men of yore, which, having been encouraged by the kings of Pergamus and Alexandria offering large sums for writings bearing great names, was afterwards adopted without intention of fraud by the race of Sophists, ' the task of whose schools it was, to compose ῥητοποιίας, to make speeches, or write letters

<sup>4</sup> *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris*, first edition, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 7.



CHAP. V. in the name of some hero, or great commander or  
 1697. philosopher,' Bentley proceeds to the Epistles of Phalaris.

Opinions  
 respecting  
 the Epistles.

Of these compositions no mention can be found in any writer earlier than the tenth century; and respecting the real author of them opinions have been various. That they were an imposture was early suspected; and Angelo Politian, one of the luminaries of the court of Lorenzo de Medici, pronounced the fabricator to be no other than Lucian: this notion, which is demonstrably erroneous, prevailed among the learned for some time. The great Erasmus had not only avowed his opinion that they were supposititious, but thought, like Bentley, that they were sorry specimens of declamation<sup>6</sup>. On the other hand, some very learned persons had believed them the genuine production of the tyrant of Agrigentum: Selden had drawn from them arguments in chronology, and Dodwell was at that very time applying them to the same purpose. This was a sufficient answer to those who contended that the discussion of their authenticity was trivial and useless. To unmask an imposture which was thus introducing material errors into our notions of ancient history, cannot be deemed an unimportant service to the cause of letters.

Bentley  
 proves them  
 spurious.

Bentley begins his argument against the pretended Phalaris with proofs taken from chronology: he next considers the *language*, then the *matter* of the Epistles,

<sup>6</sup> *Erasmi* Lib. I. Epist. I. "Porro Epistolæ quas nobis reliquit nescio quis Bruti nomine, nomine Phalaridis, nomine Senecæ, et Pauli, quid aliud censerî possunt, quam Declamatiunculæ?" Of this great opinion in his favour Bentley was probably not aware, as he does not refer to it in his first Dissertation: but he afterwards adduces it in his reply to Boyle, who had charged him at a venture 'with being the first man who had ever pretended to despise Phalaris; and with having an opinion contrary to the sense of all mankind that had ever written before him.'—*Boyle's Examination*, p. 27. *Bentley's Dissertation*, p. 6.



and concludes with the argument of their late appearance in the world. Upon the first point alone, which he justly regarded as the most satisfactory method of detecting an imposture, his proofs seem more than sufficient to procure an unanimous condemnation of the fraud. Having assumed the age of Phalaris to be in the 57th Olympiad, or about 550 years before Christ, the latest period that history will allow, and therefore the most favourable to his pretended writings, he proceeds to prove that one Sicilian city, Phintia, mentioned in the Epistles, was not named or built till nearly three centuries after his time; that another, Alæsa, was first founded above 140 years later; that the 'Thericlean cups,' ten pair of which are included in a magnificent present sent by the pretended Phalaris to a physician who had cured him of a dangerous illness, derived their name from Thericles, a Corinthian potter, who was contemporary with Aristophanes the comedian, and therefore above 120 years later than the death of the real tyrant of Agrigentum. The author speaks in one place of 'Zancle,' and in others of 'Messana;' whereas they were one and the same city, which, by the concurrent testimony of historians, had received the latter name from the exiled Messenians of the Peloponnesus above 60 years after the latest date of Phalaris's death: he makes use of a quaint phrase, '*to extirpate like a pine tree,*' the original of which belonged to Cræsus the Lydian monarch, whose reign did not begin till some years after the Sicilian was murdered: he mentions 'Tauromenium,' a name given to the city of Naxos many generations after the time of Phalaris: this pretended prince quotes a celebrated expression, '*words are the shadows of things,*' which Plutarch and Diogenes Laertius attribute to Democritus the laughing philosopher of Abdera, who was more than a century later

CHAP. V.

1697.

From chronology.



CHAP. V. 1697. than his days : the author of the Epistles shows some acquaintance with verses of Pindar and Callimachus, poets of after times ; and not only refers to a passage from an Athenian drama, but actually mentions ‘tragedies,’ the invention and name of which performance had not its origin till some years after the tyrant had expiated his crimes and cruelties in his own brazen bull.

From their  
language.

Having established these pretty formidable objections to Phalaris’s claim of authorship, he proceeds to the language of the Epistles, which is Attic, and therefore not likely to come from the prince of Agrigentum, a Doric colony, whose broad and harsh dialect differed in every thing from the refinements of Atticism. And, even admitting some childish arguments that had been suggested by Joshua Barnes, for Phalaris speaking the language of Athens, yet the style and idiom of his pretended compositions bore a character later by some centuries than the tyrant, who was contemporary with Solon, and consequently older than any Athenian writings which exist. Besides, Bentley urged that the sums of money, which the mock prince distributes with boundless profusion in his presents and purchases, were all of the Athenian standard ; since the Sicilian talent was but a two-thousandth part of the Attic, comprising only three *denarii*, while the latter was equivalent to six thousand ; the author’s ignorance of which fact plainly betrayed the forgery.

From their  
matter.

Having destroyed the credit of these reputed specimens of antiquity by such overwhelming arguments from fact, he ventures upon the most tender part of the question, their subjects and business. Respecting the force of wit and spirit, and the lively painting of humour, which Sir W. Temple fancied he discovered in them, he waives all discussion ; but proves by many



examples the want of sense and judgment which they exhibit, and detects the inaccurate and clumsy learning, and depravation of taste, which marked the scholastic exercises of the later sophists. Having quoted the glowing character of the Epistles drawn by the Baronet, I shall now give the reader the summary of the Doctor's opinion, in a paragraph containing the particular expressions for which his style of writing was most keenly attacked :

“ It would be endless to prosecute this part, and show all the silliness and impertinency in the matter of the Epistles. For, take them in the whole bulk, if a great person would give me leave, I should say, they are a fardle of common-places, without life or spirit from action and circumstance. Do but cast your eye upon Cicero's letters, or any statesman's, as Phalaris was : what lively characters of men there ! what descriptions of place ! what notifications of time ! what particularity of circumstances ! what multiplicity of designs and events ! When you return to these again, you feel, by the emptiness and deadness of them, that you converse with some dreaming pedant with his elbow on his desk ; not with an active, ambitious tyrant, with his hand on his sword, commanding a million of subjects. All that takes or affects you is a stiffness and stateliness and operoseness of style ; but as that is improper and unbecoming in all epistles, so especially it is quite aliene from the character of Phalaris, a man of business and despatch <sup>7</sup>. ”

One point only remained, the late discovery of these Epistles. Supposing Sir William Temple's opinion of their age to be correct, they must have remained concealed above a thousand years, (a period not of darkness and ignorance, but one in which literature flourished more than any in the history of the world), unknown to all the writers of antiquity, many of whom would have been greatly interested by such curious documents. This view of the question, exhibiting so many enormous absurdities, Bentley treats with a

From their  
late discovery.

<sup>7</sup> *Dissertation upon Phalaris, &c.* p. 62.



CHAP. V. liveliness and jocularly, which must have been highly  
 1697. unpalatable to the advocates of the ancient Agri-  
 gentine.

Replies to  
 Mr. Boyle.

Having dismissed Phalaris, he proceeds to discuss the edition which contained the attack upon himself :

“I must now beg the favour,” he says, “of one word with our late editors of this author. They have told the world in their preface that (among other specimens of their diligence) they collated the King’s MS. as far as the XL. epistle ; and would have done so throughout, but that the library keeper, *out of his singular humanity*, denied them the further use of it. This was meant as a lash for me, who had the honour then and since to serve his Majesty in that office. I must own, ’twas very well resolved of them, to make the preface and the book all of a piece ; for they have acted in this calumny both the injustice of the tyrant, and the forgery of the sophist. For my own part, I should never have honour’d it with a refutation in print, but have given it the neglect that is due to weak detraction, had I not been engaged to my friend to write this censure upon Phalaris ; where to omit to take notice of that slander, would be tacitly to own it <sup>8</sup>.”

He then tells the story of the bookseller and the manuscript, and his correspondence with Boyle, though in less detail than he afterwards found necessary ; and contrives in the following manner to introduce his strictures upon the literary merits of the new edition :

“*Pro singulari sua humanitate !* I could produce several letters from learned professors abroad, whose books our editors may in time be fit to read ; wherein these very same words are said of me candidly and seriously. For I endeavour to oblige even foreigners by all courtesie and humanity ; much more would I encourage and assist any useful designs at home. And I heartily wish, that I could do any service to that young gentleman of great hopes, whose name is set to the edition. I can do him no greater at present, than to remove some blemishes from the book that is ascribed to him, which I desire may be taken aright ; to be no disparagement to himself, but a reproof only to his teachers <sup>9</sup>.”

Censures  
 his edition.

He then brings forward some specimens of false translation, and mistaken readings, to which he gives

<sup>8</sup> *Dissertation upon Phalaris, &c.* p. 66.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* p. 68.



no quarter, but lashes with a severity unusual at that time in classical criticism. Such a book as the Phalaris was beneath this species of chastisement: this part of his essay does not appear well suited to the rest, but is rather a discredit and blemish to the whole performance. Nevertheless it occasioned his adversaries all the mortification which he thought they deserved. It ends with the following defiance :

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1697.

“ Let this serve for a short specimen of their care and skill in using of manuscripts. I have many more instances ready at hand; but their *humanity*, I hope, will pardon me, if I don't produce them now, nor now proceed, as I once thought, to weed all their book for them. My time does not lie upon my hands; and this tract must be only a short appendix to the book of my friend; but it's likely hereafter, if, in their way of speaking, they mightily *exhort* me to it, I may be at their service; if not in this, yet in another language; to carry the fame and glory of our editors, whither such editions as theirs seldom go, to foreign universities.”

Having overthrown the claim of Phalaris to a place among royal or noble authors, Bentley examines certain other reputed pieces of antiquity, the Letters of Themistocles, of Socrates, and of Euripides ; all which he shows not to be productions of the mighty characters whose names they bear, but forgeries of some sophists many centuries later. His arguments, like those upon Phalaris, are taken from the contradictions to history and chronology, the extravagant matter as well as tasteless language of these impostures ; all which he exposes with a happy mixture of accurate learning and playful humour. It is right to notice the manner in which he treats Joshua Barnes, whose insufferable behaviour respecting the Epistles of Euripides has been mentioned in our third chapter. Instead of resenting such conduct, he repeats calmly and good-humouredly the arguments of his private letter, enlarged and enforced by several others ; and

Other spurious epistles.



CHAP. V. of Barnes himself, who had since become Professor of  
 1697. Greek at Cambridge, he speaks in terms not of dis-  
 pleasure but of compliment.

Reply to  
 Barnes.

Æsop's Fa-  
 bles.

Their his-  
 tory.

Babrius.

Maximus  
 Planudes.

There still remained the Æsopian Fables, the other great object of Sir W. Temple's admiration; and to dispossess the old Phrygian fabulist of the credit, or rather discredit, of having written the present collection, was no difficult task. This section of Bentley's performance exhibits little novelty or research, and bears greater marks of haste than any other part of the Dissertation. It is probable that the printer was too urgent, or his friend Wotton too impatient for the publication of the book, to allow more time for the Appendix. The history of the Fables, though not generally known, had in fact been told before, and Bentley only contributed greater precision and accuracy, together with a few additional circumstances. Whether Æsop himself left any thing in writing, or whether his Fables were preserved by oral tradition, is a point which admits of dispute. From Plato we learn, that Socrates amused himself when in prison, with putting into verse some of these apologues which he happened to recollect. The first collection which we hear of was made by Demetrius Phalereus, the peripatetic philosopher of Athens, who wrote and declaimed about a century later than Socrates. After him, the Fables were put into verse by some one whose name is lost; fragments of this collection have been preserved, and are principally in elegiac measure. The present collection originated with Babrius, a Greek poet, whose age is uncertain, but whom Bentley considers to be in the latest class of good writers: he composed Æsopian Fables in scazon or choliambic verse, of which specimens are quoted by Suidas and others. Maximus Planudes, the same who translated Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Cæsar's *Commen-*



taries, and other Latin books into Greek, amused himself with the edifying task of putting Babrius into very dull prose<sup>10</sup>; and this notable performance is the very book which is the delight of our nurseries, and which Sir W. Temple extolled above all other prose writings, as being at once the oldest and the best in the world. Babrius, however, was not so completely *transposed*, but that many traces of his verse, and indeed whole choliambic lines remain; some of which Bentley pointed out, and observed that they were quoted elsewhere as from Babrius. This discovery had been before made by Neveletus, who printed 136 of the Fables, from a manuscript in the Heidelberg library, in the year 1610. Planudes, who was himself a monk, makes Æsop speak in one place of the monastic order, and in another gives a quotation from the book of Job<sup>11</sup>. The subject, however, far from being exhausted, was but slightly touched by Bentley, and has received much greater light from writers who have had the advantage of older copies; in which the verses of Babrius may be extracted from their mutilated and disguised form, and exhibit not indeed 'the oldest prose writer in existence,' but in his stead a terse, elegant, and pleasing poet, who lived many centuries nearer our own times<sup>12</sup>. To this Planudes belongs also, as Bentley

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1697.

<sup>10</sup> There is reason, however, to believe he was not the person who originated this work. See *Museum Criticum*, vol. i. p. 410.

<sup>11</sup> *Dissertation upon the Fables of Æsop*, p. 141.

<sup>12</sup> Tyrwhitt wrote a *Dissertation de Babrio, Fabularum Æsopicarum Scriptore*; with some additional Fables, from a manuscript in the Bodleian. This tract, which first appeared in 1775, was reprinted at Leipsic in 1810, by Francis de Furia, in a thick volume containing the Fables from an ancient Florentine manuscript. The most satisfactory account of the history of the Æsopian Fables will be found in an article of the *Museum Criticum*, vol. i. p. 407, for which we are indebted to the present Bishop of London, who has most ingeniously restored several complete fables to the choliambic verses of Babrius.



CHAP. V. believed, the Life of Æsop, a narrative filled with  
1697. unfounded and absurd fictions: among them is the  
 account of the old fabulist's personal deformity; which  
 story, though as generally believed as the fact that he  
 was a Phrygian and a slave to whom the Athenians  
 erected a statue, is nevertheless not only without au-  
 thority, but contrary to every fair and probable sup-  
 position<sup>13</sup>.

May.

Sensation  
 produced by  
 the Disser-  
 tation.

On the publication of this joint work, the sensation  
 in the literary and academical circles was great be-  
 yond example<sup>14</sup>. In the large and distinguished  
 society of Christ Church, a perfect ferment was pro-  
 duced by Bentley's attack upon Boyle's Phalaris,  
 which was considered an affront to the Dean under  
 whose auspices it was published, and the college for  
 whose use it was designed: and the mention of 'the  
 editors,' 'the translators,' &c. in the plural number,  
 seemed a reflection upon the whole society, as if they  
 were answerable for the faults of a juvenile publica-  
 tion. It was resolved accordingly that the audacious  
 offender should experience the full resentment of the  
 body whom he had provoked, and the task of inflict-  
 ing this public chastisement devolved upon the ablest  
 scholars and wits of the college. The leaders of the  
 confederacy were Francis Atterbury and George Smal-  
 ridge, both of them in process of time members of the  
 episcopal bench; the first of whom has associated his  
 name with the political history of this country in a  
 degree which has seldom been the lot of a church-  
 man. Each was nearly of the same age as Bentley<sup>15</sup>;  
 and they were regarded as the rising lights of the  
 University of Oxford. A share in the association for

The confe-  
 deracy.

Atterbury,  
 Smalridge.

<sup>13</sup> Bentley's *Dissertation on the Fables of Æsop*, § ix. p. 148.

<sup>14</sup> Bentley's *Dissertation* was sold separately to the purchasers of the first edition of the 'Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning.'

<sup>15</sup> Atterbury was born in 1662; Smalridge in 1663.



the demolition of our critic is claimed for Robert Freind, afterwards head-master of Westminster school, his brother John Freind, and Anthony Alsop, all students of Christ Church; and the work was undertaken with the encouragement, but not with the assistance, of the Dean. Mr. Boyle, in whose name and behalf the controversy was carried on, seems to have had but a small share in the actual operations: having now quitted academical pursuits, and entered upon the theatre of active life, he was content that his college friends should fight the battle under his colours<sup>16</sup>. It was resolved to attack every part of Bentley's book; to cavil at all his arguments, and to contend that, whatever were the merits of Phalaris and Æsop, his dissertation had failed to prove either of them spurious. But as they were likely to obtain little triumph in matters of erudition, they determined to hold up every particular of Bentley's character and conduct to ridicule and odium; to dispute his honesty and veracity as well as his learning; and by representing him as a model of pedantry, conceit, and ill-manners, to raise such an outcry as should drive him off the literary stage for ever. Accordingly, every circumstance that could be discovered respecting his life and conversation, every trivial anecdote, however unconnected with the controversy, was caught up and made a topic either of censure or ridicule. In short, the obnoxious scholar, whose only strength they supposed to be his learning, was to be borne down by the weight of a combined attack upon his literary, moral, and personal character.

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 1697.

R. Freind,  
 J. Freind,  
 Alsop.

<sup>16</sup> Warburton says, upon the authority of Pope, that Boyle supplied only a detail of the transactions with the bookseller; and that even this was corrected. *Warburton's Letters to Hurd*, p. 11. I am disposed, however, to believe that Boyle had a somewhat greater share in the book than is here represented: I shall give my reasons in a subsequent note for questioning altogether the authority of Pope's account.



CHAP. V.

1697.

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Atterbury  
the chief  
author.

The principal share in the undertaking fell to the lot of Atterbury: this fact was suspected at the time, and has been since placed beyond all doubt by the publication of a letter of his to Boyle, in which he mentions, that ‘in writing more than half the book, in reviewing a good part of the rest, and in transcribing the whole, half a year of his life had passed away.’ The main part of the discussion upon Phalaris is from his pen: that upon Æsop was believed to be written by John Freind; he was probably assisted in it by Alsop, who was at that very time engaged on an edition of the Fables. But the respective shares cannot be fixed with certainty; nor is this a matter of importance, since Atterbury has, by his own confession, made himself responsible for the faults of the whole. In point of classical learning, the joint stock of the confederacy bore no proportion to that of Bentley: their acquaintance with several of the books upon which they comment appears only to have begun upon this occasion, and sometimes they are indebted for their knowledge of them to their adversary: compared with his boundless erudition, their learning was that of schoolboys, and not always sufficient to preserve them from distressing mistakes. But profound literature was at that period confined to few, while wit and raillery found numerous and eager readers. It may be doubted whether Busby himself, by whom every one of the confederated band had been educated, possessed knowledge which would have qualified him to enter the lists in such a controversy. Besides, they had undertaken to maintain an untenable position: for, although opinions might differ upon some parts of Bentley’s performance, yet the assertion that *all* his arguments had failed to invalidate the credit of Phalaris’s Epistles, was one which committed their characters both for scholarship and



judgment. Nevertheless the confidence of wit and talent, joined with great *esprit de corps*, carried them forward ; and high were their anticipations of vengeance to be executed upon the presumptuous critic<sup>17</sup>. CHAP. V.  
1697.

There was another individual in whom Bentley's Dissertation excited a still deeper feeling of resentment. Sir William Temple had already been severely chagrined at the favourable reception of Wotton's Reflections, the work of a young and unknown author, who presumed to question the decisions of his established judgment ; but his mortification was increased ten-fold by Bentley's Appendix, which did, it must be confessed, place him in an uncomfortable predicament. He now saw it demonstrated by arguments not one of which he could refute, that the two productions believed by him to be the oldest, and pronounced to be the finest in existence, were the fabrications of some comparatively recent hand, and that they belonged to an age, in which both learning and taste had degenerated. The Baronet therefore stood in the situation of a celebrated connoisseur, who learns that the pictures which he has commended as masterpieces of Raphael or Titian, are the productions of some common sign-painter ; or in that of an antiquary, who after having published his conviction of the inimitable merit of an antique gem, finds evidence brought to prove it the performance of an ordinary modern workman. A person so circumstanced might indeed change his ground, and maintain that the forgery did really surpass in merit all the most famous originals. But Sir William had not left himself even this desperate resource : his argument for the superiority of the most ancient writings over those of all succeeding ages, was made to depend upon the anti-

Sir William  
Temple's  
mortifica-  
tion.

<sup>17</sup> Their feelings may be seen in a letter from Smalridge ; *Nichols' Illust. of Lit.* vol. iii. p. 268.



CHAP. V. 1697. quity of these very productions ; whereby he had cut off his own retreat, and in a two-fold manner staked his credit upon this questionable ground. His first step was to write a reply to both Wotton and Bentley, couched in language of indignation and contempt. This piece was left unfinished, and printed after his death ; his reputation however would have been better consulted by its suppression. It breathes an angry and resentful spirit, ill becoming a dignified and philosophic old age. His adversaries he compares with ‘ young barbarous Goths and Vandals, breaking or defacing the admirable statues of those ancient heroes,’ &c.<sup>18</sup>

His rejoinder. The part which is finished of Sir William’s rejoinder concerns the publication of Wotton, to whose arguments however he can hardly be said to reply ; he does little more than repeat his own declamatory account of the immense advances made in science, philosophy, and literature by the ancient sages of Egypt, Assyria, Greece, and Sicily, without advert- ing to the questionable nature of the testimonies upon which those pretensions rest. Before he arrived at Bentley’s Appendix, he discovered that this was already taken in hand by Boyle and his friends, who were preparing an ample punishment for his temerity ; and to them he was content to leave the cause of his ancient Sicilian and Phrygian authors.

Swift’s Tale of a Tub.

It was at this time that Jonathan Swift inserted his first attack upon our critic in the ‘ Tale of a Tub.’ The greater part of this celebrated piece of humour had been composed, as the author informs us, in the preceding year. The first design of the ‘ Tale’ was only to ridicule the corruptions and extravagancies of certain religious sects ; which part of his performance, while it displays an original genius, and a

<sup>18</sup> ‘ Some thoughts upon reviewing the Essay,’ &c. *Temple’s Works*, vol. iii. p. 471.



peculiar turn of humour, has given well grounded offence to many by the indecorous and licentious manner in which it treats the most solemn allusions. The sections containing his ridicule of criticism and of whatever else he disapproved in literature, were written upon the appearance of Wotton's and Bentley's joint publication. Swift was at this time living under the protection of Sir William Temple, at Moor Park, and regarded his patron with the utmost attachment and veneration. Perceiving the uneasiness of the Baronet at the awkward situation in which this controversy had placed him, he determined to avenge his cause by those weapons, against which no learning and no genius is entirely proof. Accordingly he gratified his patron by exhibiting his adversaries in ludicrous colours, and at the same time indulged his own propensity of treating with contempt those branches of knowledge with which he was ill acquainted. He took the same opportunity of venting private spleen against some other writers; but by placing at their head John Dryden, his distant relation, who had spoken in disparagement of some specimens of his poetry, he blunted his satire against the rest, and conferred upon them no small honour, by grouping them in such glorious company<sup>19</sup>.

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1697.

Ridicules  
Wotton and  
Bentley.

The third section of Swift's book, intitled 'A Digression concerning Critics,' is almost entirely levelled against Bentley; it represents him as a model of the '*true critic*;' a character portrayed in a mixture of irony and invective, as remarkable for the broadness of the humour, as for its being totally inapplicable to the Dissertation upon Phalaris. The

<sup>19</sup> The origin of this pique is well known: some juvenile odes of Swift having been shown to the veteran bard for his opinion of their merits, Dryden said upon inspecting them, 'Cousin Swift, you will never make a poet.'



CHAP. V. following specimens will be sufficient to justify this  
1697. remark :

“ The third and noblest sort is that of the TRUE CRITIC, whose original is the most ancient of all. Every true critic is a hero born, descending in a direct line from a celestial stem by Momus and Hybris, who begat Zoilus, who begat Tigellius, who begat Etcætera the elder; who begat Bentley, and Rymer, and Wotton, and Perrault, and Dennis; who begat Etcætera the younger.”——“ Now, from this heavenly descent of criticism, and the close analogy it bears to heroic virtue, it is easy to assign the proper employment of a true ancient genuine critic; which is, to travel through this vast world of writings; to pursue and hunt those monstrous faults bred within them; to drag out the lurking errors, like Cacus from his den; to multiply them like Hydra’s heads; and rake them together like Augeas’s dung: or else drive away a sort of dangerous fowl, who have a perverse inclination to plunder the best branches of the tree of knowledge, like those Stymphalian birds that eat up the fruit.”

In the fifth section he returns to the charge :

“ When I consider how exceedingly our illustrious moderns have eclipsed the weak glimmering lights of the ancients, and turned them out of the road of all fashionable commerce, to a degree, that our choice town wits, of most refined accomplishments, are in grave dispute, whether there have been ever any ancients or not; in which point, we are likely to receive wonderful satisfaction, from the most useful labours and lucubrations of that worthy modern, Dr. Bentley:” adding this note: “ The learned person, here meant by our author, has been endeavouring to annihilate so many ancient writers, that, until he is pleased to stop his hand, it will be dangerous to affirm, whether there have been any ancients in the world<sup>20</sup>.”

This celebrated piece succeeded at the time in obliging and gratifying Sir William Temple, and in exciting a high opinion of Swift’s talents among private friends to whom the manuscript was shown: but for some reason or other several years passed before it was given to the public.

<sup>20</sup> In another section Swift calls Dr. Bentley, ‘ that great rectifier of saddles.’



CHAPTER VI.

*Proposed new library—Bentley's club—Alsop's publication of Æsop—Boyle's Examination of Bentley's Dissertation—Dr. William King—Sir Edward Sherburn's frivolous complaint—Absurd charges against Bentley—Merits of the Christ Church book—Instances of its mistakes—Examination of Æsop—Witty proof that the Dissertation was not written by Bentley—Charge of plagiarism—Affronting Index—Causes of the great popularity of Boyle's book—Temple's reception of the book—Boyle's own sentiments—Outcry against Bentley—Keill—Milner—Garth—Aldrich—Caricature—Rymer's Essay—Swift's Battle of the Books—Bentley's behaviour—Bentley prepares a reply—Dodwell's Chronology—Bentley's enlarged Dissertation on Phalaris—Attractive nature of the work—Defence against the accusation of pedantry—Retorts Boyle's raillery—Short Account of Dr. Bentley's Humanity and Justice—Refutation of this pamphlet—Another anonymous tract—Bishop Lloyd's publication—Death of Bishop Stillingfleet—His Library—Bentley's complete victory.*

WHILE the storm was gathering from various quarters, CHAP. VI.  
Bentley's mind was directed to an object of a different 1697.  
description, the erection of a new royal library, which Proposed  
might be worthy of the nation, and of the noble col- new library.  
lection of books entrusted to his charge. It had  
formerly been intended to convey the books to the  
Roman Catholic chapel at Whitehall, a fine room  
which the abdication of James II. had left unem-  
ployed; but this scheme was defeated by the fire  
which destroyed the Palace and most of the adjoining  
buildings. The design upon which Bentley had  
fixed his heart has been already mentioned, the build-  
ing a room of appropriate size and magnificence in  
St. James's Park: for this work the sanction of the  
Lords of the Treasury had actually been obtained;  
but it was found that an Act of Parliament was requi-  
site, to procure which every exertion was made by  
himself and his friends. In promoting this as well



CHAP. VI. as his other views, we find Mr. Evelyn the foremost ;  
1697. but the violence of party disputes at that moment,  
 and the financial embarrassments of the country,  
 proved obstacles too great for all his zeal to over-  
 come <sup>1</sup>.

Bentley's  
club.

About the same time Bentley formed a club, or evening meeting of a few friends, who happened to be among the greatest intellectual characters that the history of mankind can produce : this society, which met once or twice a week in the librarian's apartments in St. James's, consisted at its foundation of Sir Christopher Wren, Mr. John Evelyn, Mr. Isaac Newton, Mr. John Locke, and Dr. Richard Bentley : names sufficient in themselves to render illustrious the age in which they lived, and the country which gave them birth <sup>2</sup>.

1698.  
Alsop's pub-  
lication of  
Æsop.

The attack from Christ Church commenced with the new year. The honour of leading the assault was given to Alsop, who published a selection of Æsop's Fables, as the Dean's present to his students. In the preface he treats Bentley in a manner which betokened what might be shortly expected ; terming him *Richardum quendam Bentleium, virum in volvendis lexicis satis diligentem* ; and describes his supposed refusal of the manuscript to Boyle, by giving the fable of the ' Dog in the manger ' in neat latinity ; where

<sup>1</sup> Evelyn's Letter to Bentley, of Dec. 25, 1698. *Evelyn's Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 284. Also Bentley's manuscript letters to Evelyn, Oct. 21, 1697, and Feb. 27, 1698. In the latter he says, " I did receive your very kind letter about your conversation with Mr. Edwards, and give you a thousand thanks for the favour ; but I fear the quarrels of the House of Commons, the unfortunate burning of Whitehall, the public necessities, and the general decay of honour and virtue, will scarce permit our bill to be brought in, at least not in this session. But, however, we are resolved not to despair, till we are actually defeated. You know my useful motto, *Possunt quia posse videntur*."

<sup>2</sup> The foundation of this society is mentioned in a manuscript letter of Bentley to Evelyn, Oct. 21, 1697.



the ironical words *singularis humanitas*, fix the allusion upon the offending librarian<sup>3</sup>. CHAP. VI.  
1698.

At length appeared the performance of the confederate wits, which was to extinguish for ever the fame and pretensions of our critic: it was a book of about 300 pages, entitled '*Dr. Bentley's Dissertations on the Epistles of Phalaris and the Fables of Æsop, examined by the Honourable Charles Boyle, Esq.*' with a motto sufficiently menacing: March.  
Boyle's examination of  
Bentley's Dissertation.

Remember Milo's end,  
Wedg'd in that timber which he strove to rend.

This work, which once enjoyed an extravagant popularity, is now little known, except through the fame of him whom it was intended to crush; since few will take the trouble of reading a controversial piece so immeasurably inferior to its opponent. But if we consider that the view of each several question which it discussed is the wrong one, it is impossible to deny to its arguments the praise of address and ingenuity. Bentley declared that the only merit of

<sup>3</sup> *Fabularum Æsopicarum Delectus*. Oxoniæ, 1698. The fable deserves to be given at length.

"CANIS IN PRÆSEPI.

Bos post laboris tædia reversus domum,  
Pro more stabulum ingreditur, ut famem levet;  
Præsepe sed prius occupaverat canis,  
Ringensque frendensque arcet a fæno bovem:  
Hunc ille morosum atque inhospitum vocat,  
Et fastuosum mentis ingenium exprobrat:  
Canis hisce graviter percitus conviciis,  
Tunc, inquit, audes me vocare inhospitum?  
Me nempe summis quem ferunt præconiis  
Gentes tibi ignotæ? Exteri si quid sciant,  
Humanitate supero quemlibet canem.  
Hunc intumentem rursus ita bos excipit,  
Hæc *singularis* an tua est *humanitas*,  
Mihi id roganti denegare pabulum,  
Gustare tu quod ipse nec vis, nec potes?"



CHAP. VI. the book was 'banter and grimace : ' but this is not a  
1698. fair statement ; no where could we find a specimen of more cleverness and adroitness shown in encountering logic and erudition with the weapons of sophistry. Against every part of the Dissertation ingenious cavils are raised, of a nature quite sufficient to delude the half-learned among its readers : the style is elegant and scholar-like, and a vein of well-sustained humour and lively raillery runs through the whole performance.

Regarded in another point of view, this book deserves severe reprehension : the spirit of hostility and persecution which it breathes is so bitter and so disproportioned to the alleged offence, that every candid mind feels disgusted. Not content with denying Bentley all credit for ability or learning, his opponents were resolved to dispute his honour and veracity in every action and word, and to represent him as a person unfit for the society of gentlemen. The object constantly kept in view is not the pursuit of truth or detection of error, but the ruin of an individual's character ; and to accomplish this no methods are thought unfair or degrading.

The facts adduced to the disparagement of Bentley's reputation, even admitting the statement of the accusers, would not justify the shocking reflections cast upon him. The affair of the bookseller and the manuscript is related upon Bennet's authority, in exaggerated terms. But, after hearing Boyle's own account, every candid person must condemn him for commencing a quarrel in resentment of a supposed slight, before he had taken any measure to ascertain that it was intended as such. His friends felt this to be the weak part of his cause ; and accordingly they laboured to prove, upon certain other testimony, that their adversary's general behaviour was uncourteous.



Dr. William King, a civilian, well known as a witty CHAP. VI.  
 writer both in prose and verse, happened to be in 1698.  
 Bennet's shop during one of the conversations about Dr. William  
 the manuscript; being an old Westminster and Christ King.  
 Church man, and a friend of Atterbury, he readily  
 furnished some recollections of the *brusque* language  
 which he had overheard. The foundation of his tale  
 was this: Bentley, immediately upon his appointment  
 to the library, had exerted himself to recover from the  
 booksellers a copy of all their respective publications,  
 to which the King's library was entitled, as well as  
 the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, but which  
 they had of late failed to deliver. Among the rest he  
 called upon Bennet for his share; who thereupon  
 complained of the hardship of the demand, questioned  
 the right of Parliament to give away his property,  
 and talked of the booksellers being a rich body, with  
 a common purse, and able to resist and litigate the  
 question. Bentley checked his talk by explaining  
 the advantages derived by publishers from the ex-  
 istence of such libraries, to which therefore it was  
 equitable that they should contribute, and mentioned  
 as an instance the manuscript of which he was at  
 that moment soliciting the use; telling him in jest  
 that he ought to make a present of a book to the  
 library in return, since the value of the manuscript  
 after its collation would be diminished; and to make  
 him comprehend this, he said, 'it would then be-  
 come like a squeezed orange.' Dr. King, who over-  
 heard this discourse, could recollect no particular  
 except Dr. Bentley's remark, 'that the manuscript  
 when collated would be worth *nothing* for the future:'  
 he testified indeed that there was 'pride and inso-  
 lence' in his discourse, but suppressed the cause which  
 had excited it; wishing it to be inferred by the



CHAP. VI. reader, that it was Mr. Boyle, and not the bookseller,  
1698. for whom the rebuke was intended <sup>4</sup>.

Sir Edward  
 Sherburn's  
 frivolous  
 complaint.

The next accusation is still more unjustifiable. It has been mentioned that Bentley, having discovered among certain papers lent to him by Sir Edward Sherburn, a manuscript tract of Rubenius, had with the permission of the owner, transmitted it to Grævius for publication, stating at the same time through whose means it came into his hands. Grævius, when he made his public acknowledgment to our critic, omitted to name Sir Edward Sherburn, either from inadvertence, or not deeming the mention of him material. The knight, who was struggling with the joint evils of old age and poverty, had been heard to make some querulous remarks about what he considered a slight: this was eagerly caught at by the Boylean party, who procured from Sir Edward a declaration that 'Dr. Bentley had ungratefully robbed him of the honour of that publication <sup>5</sup>.' This assertion, unjustifiable even upon his own view of the matter, was now made public, along with an insinuation that he had suppressed the name of Sir Edward, and thereby surreptitiously obtained the noble panegyric bestowed upon him by Grævius; as if that compliment had been any thing but the spontaneous testimony of a scholar to his learning and genius. With the controversy in hand this story had not the remotest connexion: it is painful to reflect to what disgraceful lengths even enlightened minds may be carried by indulging in the animosities of party.

Absurd  
 charges  
 against  
 Bentley.

The other stories are nearly of the same character. The Doctor is accused of refusing the use of the library to foreigners of distinction; whereas every testimony

<sup>4</sup> Boyle, p. 8. Bentley's Dissertation, Preface, p. xxxi.

<sup>5</sup> Boyle, p. 15.



which has come to us proves the reverse. The only instance relied upon by his enemies is that of one Fosse, a Dane, who complained that he could not get a sight of the famous Alexandrian manuscript. This person had made the modest request that he might have that invaluable document, the treasure and glory of the library, given to him to collate at his lodgings; a work of at least six months' constant labour. Bentley observes in his reply, that 'it was pretty hard to keep one's countenance at so senseless a proposal; however, he gave him a civil answer why he thought the favour could not be allowed him:' nor indeed is he charged with want of civility in the refusal <sup>6</sup>.

Such tales as these it is humiliating even to narrate: but upon no better grounds did Bentley's enemies rest their general accusation of his rude manners; and this they endeavoured to confirm by quotations from his writings in which he had differed in opinion from some great men, as Scaliger and Casaubon. Still more stress was laid upon his presuming to contradict the two living worthies, Sir William Temple and Professor Barnes. This attempt was preposterous, and never was failure more complete: in no one of the instances alleged is the language in which he expresses dissent either contemptuous or disrespectful; while it happens that in each case Bentley's judgment is clearly and unquestionably correct.

With regard to the learning displayed in 'Boyle's Examination,' the reader will be disappointed who expects to find either much information or much accuracy; but he will be amused with the clever and dexterous management in which the arguments of the adversary are eluded, and the several questions made to wear a new complexion. This is particularly exem-

Merits of  
the Christ  
Church  
book.

<sup>6</sup> Boyle, p. 14. Bentley's *Dissertation*, p. lxiv. *A Short Review of the Controversy*, &c. p. 24.



CHAP. VI. 1698. plified in the discussion upon 'Sicilian money,' in which part of the work we are told that even learned readers, and among them some of Bentley's friends, thought that the Christ Church party had triumphed. Upon the whole, great address is shown in pressing their plausible arguments, and in gliding hastily over the weakest parts of the question. But if we compare their performance with Bentley's reply, it will seem as if his adversaries were impelled by a sort of fatality to afford him fresh opportunity of triumph, and to make their own discomfiture needlessly severe. In one place they travel far out of their way, to dispute the law laid down by Bentley in his 'Epistle to Mill' respecting the quantity of the final syllable in anapæstic verses; but the instances which they fancy to be exceptions to this rule do in fact confirm what they were intended to overthrow. This feat, while it gave their antagonist an occasion of establishing his point more completely, exhibited a ridiculous failure on their part, which in a critical work it would not be easy to parallel. Their censures relative to the 'Greek Drama,' and the 'Age of Tragedy,' were peculiarly adapted to call forth Bentley's knowledge on those subjects. In supposing the *σατυρικὴ ποίησις* to have consisted of 'lampoons,' they confounded the name with that of the Roman *Satira*, the offspring of Italy: a blunder for which Dr. Busby's scholars ought to have blushed<sup>7</sup>. In many parts of the Examination the confederate critics seem to have parted with their lexicons and grammars too soon; as for instance in asserting that the Ionic was the dialect of Lesbos, the country of Sappho and Alcæus, they betray ignorance of history and grammar which is hardly credible<sup>8</sup>. To complete their mishaps, it is frequently found that

Instances of  
its mistakes.

<sup>7</sup> Boyle's Examination, p. 180.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p. 41.



in their sallies of ridicule the whole pith of the jest depends upon some blunder of their own : so difficult is it to be witty and wise at the same time. Of this the following passage from Boyle's book affords a tolerable specimen :

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“ The very spirit of Athenæus is got into him, who undertook to disprove some of the most remarkable particulars of Socrates' life, recorded in Xenophon and Plato, by the very same negative way of arguing that Dr. Bentley makes use of against Phalaris and Æsop; the silence and pretermission of authors; nay, and expresses himself in the same mannerly way too, calling Plato, the best bred man in the world, dog and liar, covertly indeed; whereas Dr. Bentley has bestowed much the same titles on those he disputes against, bluntly and openly. But the impartial Casaubon takes the part of those great men against his author, reproves his rudeness, and confutes his reasonings, and shows him to be, as confident clowns generally are, all over mistaken. The men of letters, I hope, will excuse this freedom; no man is readier than I am to value Athenæus for what he ought to be valued, the fragments and remains of antiquity, which he has preserved; but to see him insolently trampling on great names, is what I cannot bear without indignation.” *Boyle's Examination*, p. 238.

Unhappily for this indignant vindicator of Plato and good breeding against Athenæus and clownishness, he mistook the whole drift of the context and expressions : the words *ὁ κυὼν οὗτος* are applied by Athenæus not to Plato, but to Antisthenes, who had given the same account as Plato of certain prizes said to have been obtained by Socrates; and whom, as the founder of the sect of Cynics, he designates *κυὼν*, the title assumed by those philosophers themselves<sup>9</sup>. Nor is he more fortunate in his complaint of the Doctor's application of a Greek proverb, ‘Leucon carries one thing, his ass another,’ which Mr. Boyle fancies is ‘calling him a downright ass<sup>10</sup>.’

<sup>9</sup> *Athenæus*, lib. v. p. 216. B. *Bentley's Dissertation*, Pref. p. xcix.

<sup>10</sup> *Boyle's Examination*, p. 11. To this Bentley replied, “And by the



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1698.

Examina-  
tion of  
Æsop.

Of such mistakes there is more than a proportionate share in the part of the 'Examination' devoted to the Fables of Æsop; which is palpably written by a different hand from the rest; and of which Bentley observes, that 'the style is something worse than that of the Defence of Phalaris, and the learning a good deal worse.' Upon the genuineness of the Fables themselves hardly any stand is made, and the contest is maintained rather against the critic than the criticism; but in saucy and affronting raillery this department of the work is not in the least behind its companions.

Witty proof  
that the  
Disserta-  
tion was  
not written  
by Bentley.

Another part of 'Boyle's Examination' consists of an attempt to show, that by the same sort of arguments as those adduced against Phalaris's claim to the Epistles, it might be proved that the Dissertation itself was not written by Dr. Bentley. This *jeu*

help," he says, "of a Greek proverb, I call him downright ass." After I had censured a passage of Mr. B.'s translation that has no affinity with the original, "This puts me in mind," said I, "of the old Greek proverb, 'that Leucon carries one thing, and his ass quite another.' Where the ass is manifestly spoken of the sophist, whom I had before represented as 'an ass under a lion's skin.' And if Mr. B. has such a dearness for his Phalaris, that he will change places with him there, how can I help it? I can only protest that I put him in Leucon's place; and if he will needs compliment himself out of it, I must leave the two friends to the pleasure of their mutual civilities." *Pref. to Dissert. on Phal.* p. lxxv. This proverb seems to have been a luckless one for the Boyleans; as in another part of their book (p. 49) they accuse Bentley of comparing Mr. Boyle to 'Lucian's ass;' and by this supplemental blunder, gave a proof that these two parts *must* have been written by different hands. "Then he mentions some coarse compliments upon himself, which I have already accounted for; only here he says, I compare him with *Lucian's* ass; which, were it true, would be no coarse compliment, but a very obliging one. For Lucian's ass was a very intelligent and ingenious ass, and had more sense than any of his riders: he was no other than Lucian himself in the shape of an ass, and had a better talent at kicking and bantering than ever the Examiner will have, though it seems to be his chief one. Let the reader too observe by the way, that Mr. B. in this place has it '*Lucian's* ass;' but in another he cites it truly, '*Leucon's* ass;' and yet we are told the very same hand wrote both passages." *Pref. to Dissert. on Phal.* p. lxxxiii.



*d'esprit* was, I am inclined to believe, the production of Smalridge : it is highly humorous ; and as the chief merit of the book consists in its pleasantry, this part fairly deserves the palm. It supposes some critic to argue at the distance of several centuries, ' should it be then in existence,' that the Dissertation on Phalaris cannot be the production of Dr. Bentley, the library keeper to the King : the author dexterously contrives to adopt every word and phrase of the Doctor's charged as being pedantic or ill-mannered : from the gravity with which Bentley's own language is copied, and he is thus made to argue against himself, the perusal of this parody becomes irresistibly laughable<sup>11</sup>.

Bentley had brought this whole storm upon his head, by censuring the faults of Boyle's Phalaris as discreditable to his instructors. His criticisms are of course disputed ; but the defence set up for some grievous instances of false translation by Mr. Boyle only involves that editor in still greater difficulties. The reprisals which the Doctor's adversaries found themselves able to make were few, and not very important : in confining the ancient usage of the verbs *διώκω* and *προδίδωμι* too narrowly, he had certainly spoken in haste, and without due examination ; this is in truth the only triumph which he afforded to the advocates of Phalaris.

<sup>11</sup> *Boyle*, p. 184—201. In attributing this part of the book to Smalridge, I follow the authority of Dr. Salter, who had conversed with Bentley himself on the subject of this publication. Warburton says, that it was written by ' Dr. King of the Commons ;' and this he asserts upon the authority of Pope, ' who had been let into the secret concerning the Oxford performance.' *Letters to Hurd*, p. 10. But in the first place, Pope was at the time only ten years old ; and though he was afterwards intimate with Atterbury, yet he was not likely ever to have discussed with him a subject, which supplied only mortifying recollections. In the next place, the tone of the parody is somewhat different, and the taste unlike that of King's banter.



## CHAP. VI.

1698.

Charge of  
plagiarism.

The whole book is drawn up upon a plan of offensive warfare; but the only point calculated to make a serious impression upon Bentley's character is a charge of plagiarism in two instances. It had been alleged by Professor Barnes as an apology for Phalaris, a Dorian prince, writing in the Attic dialect, that other Greeks of Dorian colonies, and among them Ocellus of Lucania, had done the very same<sup>12</sup>. Bentley demolished this argument, by proving from extracts existing in Stobæus, that this Pythagorean did in reality compose his treatise 'on the Universe' in Doric, from which it had been translated into the common dialect. This discovery Bentley had given as his own; but his adversaries found that it had been already made by Vizzanius, in the preface to an edition of Ocellus, about fifty years before. The other instance was his observation of the verses of Babrius, still found lurking in the Æsopian Fables; which circumstance had been previously discovered and published by Neveletus. These were adduced as cases of gross plagiarism on the part of Bentley, and he was assailed with every opprobrious taunt which could be devised against a literary plunderer. This was evidently considered by the Christ Church wits as the surest and most annoying of their weapons: but for the complete success of their cause, they relied upon the numbers, the celebrity, and the influence of their college; a fact which they unwisely reveal, when in the gaiety of anticipated triumph they thus wind up their long tirade:

<sup>12</sup> " Monendus autem est lector, Phalaridis Epistolas nihilo secius genuinas esse, quod earum auctor esset Agrigenti tyrannus: is enim Astypala natus erat, una ex Cycladibus, ubi Atheniensium erat colonia: sed nec ipse Diodorus Siculus, nec Empedocles Agrigentinus, nec Ocellus Lucanus, Dorice sed Attice fere scripserunt." *Barnes, Argum. Eurip. Epistol.*



“ Especially he should take care, when the angry fit is upon him, not to vent it upon great bodies of learned men. A single writer may be trampled upon now and then, and receive correction from his hand without endeavouring to return it; but among numbers there will always be found some who have ability, and inclination, and leisure enough to do themselves and their friends right upon the injurer, though he were a champion of ten times as much strength and prowess as Dr. Bentley thinks himself to be. Besides, single adversaries die, and drop off; but Societies are immortal; their resentments are sometimes delivered down from hand to hand; and when once they have begun with a man, there is no knowing when they will leave him. CHAP. VI.  
1698.

“ ’Twere well too, if he would think it a point of prudence to observe some measures of decency towards the dead as well as the living; and not give himself that insufferable liberty of attacking their reputation and their works, in hopes that nobody will be generous enough to stand up in their behalf, and speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. He has defied Phalaris, and used him very coarsely, under the assurance, as he tells us, that ‘ he is out of his reach:’ many of Phalaris’s enemies thought the same thing, and repented of their vain confidence afterwards in his Bull. Dr. Bentley is perhaps by this time, or will suddenly be satisfied, that he also has presumed a little too much upon his distance: but ’twill be too late to repent, when he begins to bellow.”

As a parting favour, they attached to the second edition of their book ‘ A short account of Dr. Bentley by way of INDEX,’ for the pleasure of repeating once more their principal affronts; such as, ‘ his charges against the Sophists returned upon himself, for forging history’—‘ for solecisms’—‘ for *egregious dulness*’—‘ for pedantry’—‘ for declaiming’—‘ his familiar acquaintance with books that he never saw’—‘ his dogmatical air’—‘ his modesty and decency in contradicting great men, Casaubon, Erasmus, Scaliger, Sir W. Temple, Mr. Barnes, every body.’ Affronting  
index.

The uncommonly favourable reception of this motley production, generally called ‘ Boyle against Bentley,’ has long been regarded as a paradox in literary history. The work, had it been viewed upon its bare merits, must have been pronounced a total failure; for allow- Causes of  
the great  
popularity  
of Boyle’s  
book.



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1698.

ing the utmost credit to the exceptions against Bentley's Dissertation, yet every impartial scholar must have admitted, that the main effect of his arguments continued unimpaired: and whatever foundation there might be for the complaint against his personal conduct, yet the retaliation was such as neither his alleged incivility could justify, nor the wit and humour of the performance render tolerable. Nevertheless, all accounts agree in stating the applause which the book met with to have been loud and universal: and the general interest excited by this controversy, properly a business of dry learning, appears to us almost incredible. This state of public feeling is attributable in some degree to the vein of wit and satire which pervades the Christ Church performance, but still more to extraneous causes. The numbers and ability of the members of that distinguished society, who appear to have felt as one man in this common cause, had a powerful influence over public opinion. Again, the extreme popularity of Sir W. Temple, who was represented as rudely attacked, and the interest excited in behalf of Mr. Boyle, a young scholar of noble birth, who appeared in the field of controversy as the champion of an accomplished veteran, disposed people at all hazards to favour his cause. Added to this, an opinion which had been industriously circulated of Bentley's incivility, and a certain haughty carriage which undoubtedly belonged to him, gave a violent prejudice to the public mind. Severe and accurate erudition being rare in those days, people were so far deluded as to believe that on most, if not all points, Boyle was successful: we learn from Bentley himself, that the book was at first generally regarded as unanswerable; and this even among his own friends. Nobody suspected that he would venture to reply; still less that he could ever again hold



up his head in the republic of learning: the blow was thought to be fatal; and many persons, as usual, eagerly joined the cry against the devoted critic. Sir W. Temple, though he could hardly flatter himself that the Christ Church work had established his own sentiments respecting Phalaris and Æsop, yet believed that it had succeeded in destroying the reputation of Bentley, against whom he had conceived an unwarrantable resentment, grounded not upon any personal offence, but upon the powerful case which he had made out against his positions. He lost no time in pronouncing a judgment upon Boyle's publication, in which he says, 'the compass and application of so much learning, the strength and pertinence of his arguments, the candour of his relations, in return to such foul-mouthed raillery, the pleasant turns of wit, and the easiness of style, are in my opinion as extraordinary as the contrary of these all appear to be in what the Doctor and his friend have written.' In conclusion, this enemy of railing and abuse excuses his not having taken up the controversy himself, by declaring that he 'had no mind to enter the lists with such a mean, *dull*, unmannerly pedant<sup>13</sup>.'

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1698.

 Temple's  
reception of  
the book.

March 30.

To the general applause which hailed this publication, there seems to have been one exception; and that was no other than Mr. Boyle himself, in whose name it appeared, and for whom the honour of the achievement was designed. This gentleman, while his friends were so zealously fighting under his colours, was himself attending his parliamentary duties in Ireland: although he left his cause in their hands, yet he had, it seems, certain apprehensions and misgivings about the manner in which they were con-

 Boyle's own  
sentiments.

<sup>13</sup> The extracts from this letter of Sir William's, perhaps addressed to Atterbury, are given in the *Short Account of Dr. Bentley's Humanity and Justice*, &c. p. 140.



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ducting it; and during the progress of the work, expressed in his letters 'hopes that it would do no harm.' The popularity of the book causing a new edition to be immediately called for, he took that opportunity of inserting some improvements and some corrections, for which he was indebted to another friend, whom I apprehend to have been his former tutor, Dr. Gale the Dean of York<sup>14</sup>. These were transmitted to Atterbury, the leader of the confederacy, whose proud spirit immediately took fire: considering this as a proof of distrust, and ingratitude to one who had by his own labour procured so much reputation for his pupil, he returned the papers to Boyle with a letter of indignant complaint, reproaching him for his thankless behaviour, and declining all further interference in the controversy<sup>15</sup>.

Outcry  
against  
Bentley.

Keill.

Notwithstanding this dissension at the head-quarters of his enemies, the clamour against our devoted critic continued loud and incessant; nor was it confined to one description of persons; all who wished to attract attention by declaiming upon a popular topic joined in the cry. We find philosophers and wits, poets and critics, divines and physicians, gray-beards and strip-lings, Oxford men and Cambridge men, combining to hunt down the enemy of Temple and Boyle. John Keill, of Baliol College, a mathematician of high reputation, was at this time publishing his first work, an 'Examination of Burnet's Theory of the Earth;' and, from no assignable motive except a wish to in-

<sup>14</sup> Wotton, in the Appendix to his *Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning*, 3d edit. 1705, mentions the belief that Dr. Gale had some concern in *Boyle's Examination*. The Dean himself says, in a letter to Mr. Pepys, of March 18, 1698-99: "The quarrel between Mr. Boyle and Dr. Bentley I abominated from the first. I like it not better now: so much as I have read of the book (i. e. *Bentley against Boyle*) gives me the same idea that you have of it." *Pepys's Correspondence*, p. 164.

<sup>15</sup> This letter will be found in *Atterbury's Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 21.



gratiate himself with the enemies of Bentley, he ran- CHAP. VI.  
sacked the philosophical part of his 'Lectures on 1698.  
Atheism' for some opportunity of cavil. In his astronomy he could find but two flaws; and these he went far out of his way to mention with indecent asperity<sup>16</sup>. The first was, a remark that 'though the axis of the earth had been perpendicular to the plane of the ecliptic, yet, take the whole year about, we should have had the same measure of heat as we have now;' where Keill chose to understand '*we*' as signifying the inhabitants of the temperate zone, instead of *the whole earth*; in which latter sense the assertion is correctly true. The other observation was certainly an error; that 'the moon does not wheel about her own centre;' but it was an error which had been committed by every astronomer before Newton, who first discovered that the moon *does* revolve about her axis, and this is mentioned in an incidental sentence of the *Principia*, which Bentley had either overlooked or forgotten. Keill concludes his ill-natured attack upon a writer who had deserved so well of the cause in which he was himself labouring, with this pitiful sneer: 'It were to be wished that great critics would confine their labours to their lexicons, and not venture to guess in those parts of learning which are capable of demonstration:' speaking as if he thought that a person's classical attainments did in themselves disqualify him for other and more severe studies.

John Milner, a veteran schoolmaster at Leeds, Milner.  
engaged in the dispute on Phalaris, in a book called  
'A View of the Dissertation,' &c.; and took part

<sup>16</sup> *Examination of Dr. Burnet's Theory*, &c. p. 70. Bentley, in the next edition of his Boyle's Lectures, altered *we*, in the first passage, into '*the whole earth*,' and omitted the second altogether. Keill's malevolent remarks met with a merited rebuke from Wotton, in the third edition of his *Reflections*, p. 478, and I have never seen his conduct in this matter mentioned in any terms but those of reprobation.



CHAP. VI. against our critic; but in so doing he gave Bentley  
1698. an occasion to correct two or three mistakes or mis-  
 apprehensions, the only fresh contribution which he  
 brought to this controversy<sup>17</sup>.

Garth. Dr. Garth, his contemporary at Cambridge, who  
 was related to the Boyles, published about this time  
 his well-known poem, 'The Dispensary,' and pro-  
 nounced his judgment upon the merits of the two  
 combatants in this simile:

" So diamonds take a lustre from their foil,  
 And to a Bentley 'tis we owe a Boyle:"

a couplet which is, perhaps, more frequently quoted  
 than any other in the poem, and always to the dis-  
 paragement of the author's judgment. In a collec-  
 tion of Latin verses printed at Oxford, called *Examen*  
*Poeticum Duplex*, Bentley is held up as an object of  
 ridicule by two different hands, one of whom was  
 Aldrich. asserted to be 'Dean Aldrich himself, or a brother  
 Caricature. Doctor of Divinity'<sup>18</sup>. At Cambridge a caricature  
 was exhibited of Phalaris putting the unfortunate  
 critic into his brazen bull; and as it was thought that  
 a member of St. John's College could not properly  
 make his exit without a pun, he was represented as  
 saying, 'I had rather be roasted than BOYLED'<sup>19</sup>.

Though there already existed literary journals in  
 England, they had not yet assumed the character or  
 functions of our modern Reviews. The same office,  
 however, was performed by pamphlets. One of these  
 Rymer's speedily came forth, termed 'An Essay concerning  
 Essay. Critical and Curious Learning, in which are contained

<sup>17</sup> Bentley replies to him, *Dissert. on Phal.* p. 214, 215. terming him  
 'an unknown author, who has mixed himself in this controversy.'

<sup>18</sup> *Essay on Critical and Curious Learning*, p. 70. Of the other poem,  
 all the wit is contained in the following line: 'Anglo-Græco-Latino-cre-  
 pundia Benteiana.'

<sup>19</sup> *Budgell's Lives of the Boyles*, p. 193.



some short reflections on the controversie betwixt Sir W. Temple and Mr. Wotton, and that betwixt Dr. Bentley and Mr. Boyl.' The author was Thomas Rymer, who is now best known as a laborious antiquary, the principal compiler of the numerous and ponderous volumes of the *Fædera*, but who seems to have enjoyed at that time no inconsiderable reputation as a critic. This article displays its impartiality by dispensing censures upon all parties concerned with the tone and authority assumed by a fastidious reviewer: except indeed that Sir W. Temple is declared a perfect and faultless writer; and to take any exception to his decisions is pronounced the height of presumption. Rymer condemns our critic for having resented Boyle's reflection at all, for having used rudeness in the manner of doing so, and, lastly, for contesting such an unimportant question as that respecting Phalaris and Æsop. The only real charge, that of rudeness, is not substantiated; and in regard to his last censure nothing can be more unphilosophical than his reasoning. He contends that all inquiries of a 'curious' nature, carried beyond a supposed point of utility (which never can be ascertained), are wrong in themselves, because they are fruitless. To this doctrine nobody who is acquainted with the progress of human knowledge can ever subscribe. Such pursuits, if they have no important results, are at least innocent, and are the amusements of a liberal mind. But it is well known that some of the greatest advances in science and literature have been made by following up such 'curious' investigations as did not at first promise any great reward to the inquirer. Upon the confederacy who, under the name of Mr. Boyle, had clubbed their forces for the purpose of writing down an individual, Rymer bestows a full measure of censure. They are condemned for the rancour of their

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1698.



CHAP. VI. 1698. language, and for their arrogant pretensions grounded upon the celebrity of their college. He adds some reflections upon the supercilious air of superiority assumed by Christ Church men of that day towards the rest of the University ; which was encouraged by their Dean, upon whom he is particularly severe <sup>20</sup>. This provocation called forth an immediate and angry reply from the college ; the author of which abuses Rymer and Bentley in alternate sentences, directing his principal complaint, just as his precursors had done, against the *ill-breeding* of his adversaries <sup>21</sup>.

Swift's  
Battle of  
the Books.

Of all the attacks upon Bentley written at this period, the only one which continues to be known by its own merits, is Swift's 'Battle of the Books,' a piece exhibiting perhaps more than any of his writings the original vein of humour which distinguishes its author. Like its predecessor, 'the Tale of a Tub,' it was composed to soothe the mortified feelings of his patron, Sir W. Temple, by sacrificing to eternal ridicule the objects of his resentment : and it continues to be read and laughed over by thousands, who would have turned a deaf ear to the eloquence of the English Memmius, and all the combined wit and learning of Christ Church. The idea of this piece, as well as the

<sup>20</sup> *Essay on Critical and Curious Learning*, p. 63. "If I may be permitted to suggest my own opinion, I fancy this book was written (as most public compositions in that college are) by a select club. There is such a profusion of wit all along, and such variety of points and raillery, that every man seems to have thrown in a repartee or so in his turn, and the most ingenious Dr. Aldrich no doubt was at the head of them, and smoked and punned plentifully on this occasion. It brings the old character of Christ Church very fresh into my mind ; which you may remember distinguished itself from the rest of the University, not by its extraordinary learning, but its abominable arrogance.—The Dean, instead of checking this intolerable temper, encourages and promotes it by his own worthy example. It is not long since he published a small Compendium of Logic, for the use of Mr. Boyle," &c.

<sup>21</sup> "An Answer to a late Pamphlet called an *Essay concerning Critical and Curious Learning*." London. 1698. 8vo.



arrangement of the combat, was borrowed from a CHAP. VI. French poem by Coutray, called '*Histoire Poetique* 1698. *de la Guerre nouvellement declarée entre les anciens et les modernes*;' but the humour, the spirit, and the satire are sustained in a manner peculiar to Swift; who displays here the same talent as in his Gulliver, of reconciling the reader to the most monstrous fictions, and of giving almost an air of probability to the wildest offsprings of an all-licenced fancy. In so professed a satire, the reader hardly expects to find the semblance of fairness in estimating the relative strength of the parties who are brought into deadly strife in St. James's Library. But it has been remarked that in some cases, Swift is guilty of less injustice to Englishmen than Sir W. Temple, who committed his high reputation by a serious and studied estimate of the comparative claims of ancient and modern writers to the gratitude of mankind. Shakspeare and Newton, the two great glories of our island, pass alike unnoticed by the statesman and the wit; except that each indulges a sneer at the philosopher, along with the rest of the Royal Society: but of Milton a distinguished notice is taken by Swift: and while Sir William chose to be totally ignorant that such a philosopher as Lord Bacon had ever existed, and declared that 'he knew of no new philosophers, that had made their entries upon that noble stage for fifteen hundred years, unless Des Cartes and Hobbes should pretend to it,' the 'Battle of the Books' assigns to Bacon the foremost place among the opposers of Aristotle.

In the combat and the parley between Virgil and Dryden, Swift takes a fresh occasion to discharge his spleen against his illustrious kinsman. But it is upon Wotton and Bentley, particularly the latter, that the full vehemence of his unbridled satire is let loose. The greater part of the ridicule thrown upon our



CHAP. VI. critic, whose leading demerits are represented to be  
1698. dulness and hatred of the ancients, is so remarkably inapplicable, that no degree of humour less than Swift's could make it palatable :

“ The guardian of the regal library, a person of great valour, but chiefly renowned for his humanity, had been a fierce champion for the moderns; and, in an engagement upon Parnassus, had vowed, with his own hands, to knock down two of the ancient chiefs, who guarded a small pass on the superior rock; but, endeavouring to climb up, was cruelly obstructed by his own unhappy weight, and tendency towards his centre.”

This mock-heroic combat concludes with the ‘ Episode of Bentley and Wotton,’ which has succeeded as completely as the author could have wished among the lovers of broad humour, and has immortalized the supposed triumph of Boyle over the two friends.

Bentley's  
sentiments.

Bentley meanwhile remained calm under this merciless storm, relying upon the goodness of his cause, and a conviction that the public judgment, however strangely it may be perverted for a time, will at length come to a just decision upon every question. Warburton tells an anecdote upon the authority of Dr. S. (whom I apprehend to be Smalbroke, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry) who meeting Bentley at this period, and telling him not to be discouraged at the run made against him, was answered, “ Indeed I am in no pain about the matter, for it is a maxim with me that no man was ever written out of reputation but by himself<sup>22</sup>. ” He had now, however, to experience the most painful of all circumstances attending popular

<sup>22</sup> This anecdote is told by Warburton in a note on Pope's Imitation of Horace's Epistle to Augustus, v. 104. Its publication was in 1749, which enables me to fix the teller of the anecdote, whom he terms Dr. S. a learned prelate now living. Warburton, however, is mistaken in saying that it was *after* ‘ the publication of that noble piece of criticism, the answer to the Oxford writers.’ At that time both speeches would have been inapplicable.



outcry, the desertion or coldness of friends, whose regards were influenced by fashion. That he felt uneasiness at this situation may well be believed; indeed he confesses as much in one of his letters to Grævius; but instead of expressing this to the world, he applied himself to write such an answer as should effectually turn the tide of popular opinion, and make the weapons of his enemies recoil upon their own heads. His sentiments at this time are expressed in a letter to his unshaken friend Evelyn, who appears to have stood up alone as his defender, and to have recommended people to wait and hear the other side, before they pronounced his condemnation. He feels gratefully this proof of Evelyn's friendship; and assures him that he shall very shortly be able to refute all the charges and all the cavils of his enemies, so fully 'both in points of learning and points of fact, that they themselves would feel ashamed.' Though this was only three or four weeks after the appearance of their book, his answer was almost ready, and he intended it to be at the press within a few days.

That Bentley did not immediately reply to his adversaries must be regarded as fortunate, not only for himself, but for the whole learned world. Although there is no doubt but that such a publication as he meditated would have put him in possession of the victory and settled the whole controversy, so perfectly was he master of all parts of the question, yet a hasty performance could not have supplied us with such a valuable treasure of wit and learning as appeared at the beginning of the following year: a piece which, by the concurring testimony of all scholars, has never been rivalled. The Boyleans had pursued a course calculated to display their adversary to the greatest advantage, and to raise to the highest

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pinnacle the reputation which they designed to overturn. In their efforts to confute his reasonings about Phalaris they had introduced a variety of new topics, which the writers from whence they drew their knowledge had treated either erroneously or slightly. This imposed upon Bentley the necessity of explaining and elucidating them; in doing which he was able to develope stores of learning more abundant than either his friends hoped, or his enemies apprehended. It was fully believed that his first Dissertation had been the elaborate result of more than two years' attention to the subject; that his bolt was now shot, and his learning and objections exhausted. So far was this from being the case, that it had in fact been a hasty sketch, the sheets of which were sent to the press as fast as they were written. When the famous Reply appeared, the public found to their astonishment, that the former piece had consisted only of the sprinklings of immense stores of knowledge, which might almost be said, like his talents, to expand with the occasion that called them forth.

Bentley  
prepares a  
reply.

Before he submitted his case to the world, Bentley was careful to arm himself with a full refutation of those charges upon his personal behaviour which, futile and despicable as they now sound, had produced a great impression to his disadvantage. The principal part of the bookseller's accusations he was enabled to refute by the very same description of arguments which he had so successfully used against the genuineness of Phalaris, a comparison of dates. To disprove the calumny that he had disguised the name of Sir Edward Sherburn as the proprietor of Rubenius's tract in order to obtain the dedication of Grævius for himself, he applied to his venerable correspondent for a copy of the communication in which he had introduced the subject. Grævius transcribed



that part of his letter, by which it appeared that the charge of his enemies was as unfounded as it was illiberal, and that he had explained the whole circumstance, with due mention of the knight's name; whose merit in the discovery, to say the truth, amounted to little or nothing. Grævius laid the blame upon his own negligence, as the means of drawing unmerited slander upon his friend; of the defence set up for Phalaris and Æsop he spoke with indignation and contempt; and of the controversy itself he expressed himself in such terms as gave a fair prognostication of what would be the opinion of scholars, when party prejudice had ceased to operate.

The chronology of early Grecian history is involved in great and perplexing obscurity; so contradictory are the statements of the writers from whom this information must be sought. Such investigations demand a sound and discriminating judgment, as well as extensive and accurate learning. I apprehend that before this period Bentley had not bestowed more than an ordinary share of attention upon this pursuit. But the questions of the age of Phalaris, of Pythagoras, and of other worthies who lived in the early periods of history, being closely connected with the work on which he was embarked, he now exerted all his acuteness in unravelling and clearing the subject. Dodwell's work *De Cyclis Veterum* being then in the press, Bentley was indulged by the author with a sight of that part which concerned his inquiry. It had been composed before Bentley's first Dissertation had dispossessed Phalaris of his claim to the Epistles; and Dodwell, led by the vulgar error to believe in their authenticity, had unhappily availed himself of their contents to determine certain dates; a step which might have been seriously pre-

Dodwell's  
Chronology.



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judicial to historical knowledge, but for the timely interposition of our critic. This field of chronology has exercised the learning and sagacity of more heroes of literature than perhaps any other; it brings Bentley into immediate comparison with Scaliger, Usher, Lloyd, and Dodwell; and we shall only observe, that the reader of Bentley's dissertation on the age of Phalaris, and of Pythagoras, will find no inferiority to any of the great persons whose names have just been mentioned.

1699.

Bentley's  
enlarged  
Disserta-  
tion.

The Doctor found his book swell to a scale far beyond his original design; and his remarks upon Phalaris alone having extended to above 600 pages, he gave the volume to the world at the beginning of the year 1699. His reply to the Examiner's strictures respecting Æsop's Fables he reserved for a second part, for fear either of delaying his reply till the public interest had subsided, or of making the book too large for general circulation.

As the new work comprised the greater part of the former Dissertation, its title was, *A Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris: with an Answer to the Objections of the Hon. Charles Boyle. By Richard Bentley, D.D. Chaplain in Ordinary and Library Keeper to his Majesty.* Its motto was from Horace:

“ Mordear opprobriis falsis, mutemve colores?  
Falsus honor juvat, et mendax Infamia terret  
Quem nisi mendacem et mendosum?”

The appearance of this work is to be considered an epoch not only in the life of Bentley, but in the history of literature. The victory obtained over his opponents, although the most complete that can be imagined, constitutes but a small part of the merits of this performance. Such is the author's address that, while every page is professedly controversial,



there is embodied in the work a quantity of accurate information relative to history, chronology, antiquities, philology, and criticism, which it would be difficult to match in any other volume. The cavils of the Boyleans had fortunately touched upon so many topics, as to draw from their adversary a mass of learning, none of which is misplaced or superfluous : he contrives, with admirable judgment, to give the reader all the information which can be desired upon each question, while he never loses sight of his main object. Profound and various as are the sources of his learning, every thing is so well arranged, and placed in so clear a view, that the student who is only in the elementary parts of classical literature may peruse the book with profit and pleasure, while the most learned reader cannot fail to find his knowledge enlarged. Nor is this merely the language of those who are partial to the author ; the eminently learned Dodwell, who had no peculiar motive to be pleased with a work by which he was himself a considerable sufferer, and who as a non-juror was prejudiced against Bentley's party, is recorded to have avowed, ' that he had never learned so much from any book in his life <sup>23</sup>.'

CHAP. VI.  
1699.

This learned volume owes much of its attraction to Attractive nature of the work.

<sup>23</sup> This is told by Dr. Salter, in a note affixed to Bowyer's edition of the Dissertation, p. 449. He says in the same place that Dodwell, 'in a letter to Bentley which he had seen, reproves him with some severity as guilty of unpardonable affectation in pretending a contempt of his adversaries.' If this be true, Dodwell did not regard the controversy fairly. Considering their pretensions and their performances, Bentley gives them at least as much credit as was their due. The compliment of Grævius is not very unlike that of Dodwell : in his Letter of May 3, 1699, he says to Bentley, "*Pro tua quam mihi misisti Apologia maximas tibi ago gratias : nihil vulgare mihi de illa sponsonderam ; sed vicit opinionem meam doctrinae varietate et copia, quæ supra hujus argumenti, in quo elaborasti, mediocritatem assurgit,*" &c.—Oct. 9. "*Quam multa didicerim ex hoc libro pulcherrimo et varia doctrina recondita referto, malo apud alios, quam apud te.*"



CHAP. VI. 1699. the strain of humour, which makes the perusal highly entertaining. The advocates of Phalaris, having chosen to rely upon wit and raillery, were now made to feel in their turn the consequences of the warfare which they had adopted. In holding up his enemies to laughter, Bentley's address is no less conspicuous than his wit: he says in the preface, "I have endeavoured to take Mr. Boyle's advice, and to avoid all ridicule where it was possible to avoid it: and if ever 'that odd work of his' has irresistibly moved me to a little jest and laughter, I am content that what is the greatest virtue of *his* book should be counted the greatest fault of *mine*<sup>24</sup>." He generally succeeds in exposing the poverty of the jest attempted by the Boyleans; and, having convicted them of some gross mistake committed in their eagerness to be witty, he effectually turns the laugh against themselves. And although he recurs perpetually to the same method, and that too with the keenest irony, yet the occasions are so well chosen, that we are neither sated nor offended by the repetition: so careful is he that the provocation shall have proceeded from his adversaries. Moreover, by always stopping short of the point to which strict justice would have allowed retaliation, he contrives to engage the reader's good-will in his favour. In this part of his controversial tactics, as well as in the whole of the argument, he owes much of his success to his strong sense, and to that acute logic which we have more than once had occasion to notice. The talent exhibited in reducing to an absurdity all the erroneous positions of his adversaries, is scarcely to be paralleled. Even Bishop Warburton, who was not well disposed to Bentley's reputation, admits that

<sup>24</sup> Preface to *Dissert. on Phal.* p. xlii.



‘ he beat the Oxford men at their own weapons.’ CHAP. VI.  
1699.  
Such is the lively interest which his unabated strain of humour confers on the book, that a person who looks into any part of it finds himself almost irresistibly carried forward. It has been a matter of my own observation for many years, that young men who have consulted the Dissertation with no other view than to obtain information respecting the history of tragedy, the Attic dialect, or some other subject connected with their studies, have unexpectedly felt such interest in the train of argument, as to read the whole work with appetite and delight.

So well sustained is the learning, the wit, and the spirit of this production, that it is not possible to select particular parts as objects of admiration, without committing a sort of injustice to the rest. And the book itself will continue to be in the hands of all educated persons, as long as literature maintains its hold in society.

The preface contains his defence against the charges made upon his personal character : his vindication is in every instance satisfactory and triumphant. The affair of the manuscript, and the paltry insinuation respecting Sir Edward Sherburn, are treated with such clearness, and such temper, that even the authors of the calumnies must have felt ashamed of their injustice. To the complaint that he had spoken roughly and injuriously of Mr. Boyle in his first Dissertation, he replies by showing that he was not the aggressor, but the injured party, and that it was scarcely possible, while vindicating his own character, to have spoken with less severity of him by whom it had been assailed. To the charge of plagiarism, for having taken his remark upon the language of Ocellus Lucanus without acknowledgment from Vizzanius, he



CHAP. VI. replies that at the time of writing he had not seen  
1699. that edition.

Defence  
against ac-  
cusation of  
pedantry.

Upon the peculiarities of Bentley's style of writing his adversaries had insisted, as if they actually look upon this as a point in their own favour. They consider it one of the marks of a *pedant* 'to use a Greek or Latin word, when there is an English one that signifies the very same thing.' The Doctor's justification will perhaps not carry perfect satisfaction to the reader's mind: however, as there are occasions for finding fault with this practice throughout all his writings, it is but fair to quote his own apology.

"Now, if this be one of Mr. Boyle's marks, himself is a pedant, by his own confession: for, in this very sentence of his, *signify* is a Latin word, and there is an English one that *means* the very same thing. We shall do the Examiner therefore no injury in calling him pedant, upon this article. But if such a general censure, as this forward author here passes, had been always fastened upon those that enrich our language from the Latin and Greek stores, what a fine condition had our language been in! It is well known, it has scarce any words, besides monosyllables, of its native growth; and were all the rest imported and introduced by pedants?—The words in my book, which he excepts against, are 'commentitious, repudiate, concede, aliene, vernacular, timid, negoce, putid,' and 'idiom;' every one of which were in print, before I used them, and most of them before I was born. And are they not all regularly formed, and kept to the true and genuine sense that they have in the original? Why may we not say 'negoce' from *negotium*; as well as 'commerce' from *commercium*, and 'palace' from *palatium*? Has not the French nation been before-hand with us in espousing it? and have not we 'negotiate' and 'negotiation,' words that grow upon the same root, in the commonest use? and why may not I say 'aliene,' as well as the learned Sir Henry Spelman, who used it eighty years since, and yet was never thought a pedant? But he says 'My words will be hissed off the stage, as soon as they come on.' If so, they would have been hissed off long before I had come on. But the Examiner might have remembered, before he talked thus at large, who it was that distinguished his style with 'ignore' and 'recognosce,' and other words of that sort; which no body has yet thought fit to follow



him in. For his argument, if it proved any thing, would prove per- CHAP. VI.  
haps too much; and bring the glory of his own family into the tribe 1699.  
of pedants. Though I must freely declare, I would rather use, not  
my own words only, but even these too, (if I did it sparingly, and  
but once or twice at most in CLII pages :) than that single word of  
the Examiner's 'cotemporary;' which is a downright barbarism.  
For the Latins never use *co* for *con* except before a vowel; as 'co-  
equal, co-eternal;' but, before a consonant, they either retain the N;  
as 'contemporary, constitution;' or melt it into another letter; as  
'collection, comprehension.' So that the Examiner's 'COTEMPORARY'  
is a word of his own *coposition*, for which the learned world will  
*cogratulate* him." *Pref.* p. lxxxiv.

Bentley's vindication of himself against another charge of pedantry, that of writing proper names, such as *Delphi*, correctly, and deserting vulgar errors, is more completely successful: and from that day, Mr. Boyle's *Delphos* has been classed with the *mumpsimus* of the Romish priest; nor has any writer been since found to uphold gross barbarisms upon the authority of 'common custom.'

The argument of his opponents 'that Dr. Bentley cannot be the author of the Dissertation,' he calls Retorts Boyle's railing.  
'an insipid banter, which seems rather to have been written in a tavern than a study:' an unfair character of that *jeu d'esprit*; but his retaliation is surprisingly caustic:

"If another should answer him in his own way, and pretend to prove, 'that Mr. Boyle is not the author of the Examination,' from the variety of styles in it, from its contradictions to his edition of Phalaris, from its contradictions to itself, from its contradictions to Mr. Boyle's character, and to his title of Honourable, and from several other topics; it would be taken perhaps for no raillery, but too serious a repartee; or at least might pass for a true jest, though intended only for a merry one." *Dissert.* *Pref.* p. cviii.

Of the *Index*, which concludes his antagonist's book, the Doctor takes this notice:



CHAP. VI. " Mr. Boyle thought fit, in his second edition, to rake up all his  
 1699. affronts upon me together, under the title of 'A short account of  
 Dr. Bentley, by way of Index.' And in an imperfect imitation of so  
 great an example, I had drawn up 'an account,' not of Mr. Boyle,  
 but 'of his performance, by way of Synopsis.' But, when I saw  
 such a multitude of errors concentrated together, the sight was so  
 deformed and disagreeable, '*miseranda vel hosti*,' that no resentment  
 could prevail with me to return him his own compliment." P. cxii.

The introduction to the original Dissertation was omitted in the second edition, and gave place to one better suiting the present state of the controversy. Our critic cancelled likewise the last section, in which the affair of the manuscript had been discussed, and the faults of Boyle's edition of Phalaris exposed. The former point is more fully handled in the preface; and perhaps he felt ashamed of perpetuating in a work of profound learning a critique upon the venial errors of a youthful editor. Bentley being at this time in expectation of a continuance of the controversy, intended to translate his whole publication into Latin, and was enlarging it by a reply to the Examination of Æsop, and his discourse upon the other spurious Epistles. But his adversaries were content with the present display of his wit and learning, and forebore to call upon him for any further satisfaction. Thus it happened that the most valuable of all critical essays remained long inaccessible except to natives of this country, and the few continental scholars who understood the English language. Nor was it till after nearly eighty years, when a Latin version of the Dissertation, made by Lennep, was published along with his edition of Phalaris, that foreigners became possessed of this literary treasure<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> *Phalaridis Epistolæ. Quas Latinas fecit, et, interpositis Caroli Boyle Notis, Commentariis illustravit Joannes Daniel a Lennep. Groningæ, 1777.* This edition was published after the death of Lennep by his friend Valcke-



Sir William Temple was spared the mortification of beholding the result of a controversy, upon which he had so imprudently staked his credit for taste and discernment. He died a few weeks before the appearance of the Dissertation, which was to annihilate for ever the pretensions of his Sicilian hero to the fame of authorship. His Christ Church allies did not feel easy under the report that a reply from Dr. Bentley was in preparation, and they seem to have thought in earnest of executing the threat denounced in the gaiety of their hearts, that if the Doctor were not quiet, 'they would put forth a book against him every month as long as he lived.' Just at the time of the appearance of *Bentley against Boyle*, (for so the incomparable Reply was generally styled), they had one of these attacks ready for publication; a piece of abuse, the subject of which was quite foreign to the controversy. It is called *A Short Account of Dr. Bentley's Humanity and Justice to those Authors*

CHAP. VI.  
1699.

'Short Account of Dr. Bentley's Humanity and Justice.'

naer, who prefixed a preface and some notes of his own. The reader may like to see his observations upon the controversy, as they proceed from a scholar whose name ranks in a class next to Bentley's: "Bentleius in Dissertatione de Phalaridis, Themistoclis, Socratis, Euripidis aliorumque Epistolis, et de Fabulis Æsopi, in Responsione quoque, qua Dissertationem suam vindicat a censura Caroli Boyle, sic evicit has Epistolas sub nomine Phalaridis a recentiore sophista fuisse confictas, ut ea res amplius in controversiam cadere non possit." *Valck. Præf. in Phal. Epist.* p. v. "Anglici Codicis M.S. ex Bibl. Regia Cottoniana qui litem Boyleum inter et Bentleium, utroque indignam, sed nobis utilissimam et posteritati, peperit, collationem accuratissimam ad Ed. Boyleanam in gratiam Lennepii ab amico clariss. D. Ruhnkenio rogatus instituit vir humanissimus Henricus Gally, S. T. P. Canonicus Norwicensis et Glocestriensis: qui, dum fuit in vivis, Magnæ Britanniae Regi erat a sacris." *Ibid.* p. vi. "De his Epistolis, a docto sophista, homine, meo quidem iudicio, in Italia nato, cui lingua Græca non erat vernacula (vid. a me notata in p. 200), scriptis pæne nimis est severum magni Bentleii, sed ab editore Boyleo irritati, iudicium." *Ibid.* p. viii. The passage to which Valckenaer refers as one proof among a number, of the author of Phalaris's epistles having been a person whose mother tongue was the Latin, is, ἐκτεῖναι δυνάμενος τὴν φήμην, a Latin not a Greek phrase. Virgil: "*sed famam extendere factis Hoc virtutis opus.*"



CHAP. VI. *who have written before him, &c. &c.* A bad and  
1699. rancorous feeling pervades this anonymous rhapsody. After a vapid declamation upon Bentley's want of veracity, manners, and learning, his 'singular humanity,' and other topics borrowed from Boyle's book, there follows a prancing attack upon the arrogance shown in his first work, the Epistle to Mill, eight years before; wherein he had questioned the judgment of certain great writers, as Gerard Vossius, Leo Allatius, Scaliger, and Grotius, and had even ventured to correct Casaubon, and other masters of learning. A charge of such a nature only proves the want of learning in the person who makes it. We next find a heavy complaint of his having dared to dispute the accuracy of certain quotations found in the fathers, and other ecclesiastical writers. Then comes the main accusation, that Bentley had stolen a great part of his celebrated collection of the Fragments of Callimachus from certain manuscript papers left by Thomas Stanley, the editor of *Æschylus*. The charge of plagiarism is one to which critical scholars are, from the nature of their pursuits, constantly exposed; since no care can secure them from sometimes publishing remarks and conjectures, without being aware that they have already been made by others. Every candid person is slow to believe that such coincidences are the result of any thing but accident; and theft would be equally dishonourable and foolish, in a case where detection is sure, sooner or later, to ensue: yet it is by these insinuations that the characters of illustrious scholars have not unfrequently been assailed by the envious and malignant. The present accusation happened to carry its refutation along with it; since it appeared that Stanley's collection, which was among the papers lent to our critic by Sir Edward Sherburn, was

Alleged  
Plagiarism  
from Stanley.



merely taken from Athenæus, Suidas, the Etymologus CHAP. VI.  
 Magnus, Harpocraton, and other grammarians, with 1699.  
 whom Bentley had shown himself to be peculiarly  
 conversant; and whom, as is proved by his collection  
 of those very fragments, he had examined and sifted  
 with more diligence than Stanley; a fact virtually  
 admitted by the accuser himself. No person of com-  
 mon learning or common candour can read the evi-  
 dence for this charge without pronouncing it to be  
 frivolous and malicious: nor is there the least reason  
 to suspect that Bentley, supposing him to have ex-  
 amined Stanley's papers, was indebted to them for a  
 single fragment, or a single correction. But the  
 charge was urged with rancour; and his enemies  
 hoped to give it the colour and air of truth, by  
 declaring that the original manuscript of Stanley  
 was left at Bennet's shop, for the examination of the  
 curious. Just as this new engine for the Doctor's  
 destruction was ready to discharge its fire, the Reply  
 to Boyle came forth, and at once reversed the situation  
 of the parties. The Boyleans were now the persons  
 accused; they stood arraigned for language and con-  
 duct which, to a certain degree, militated against  
 gentlemanly and liberal principles; their arguments  
 were shown to be feeble and unsound; they were  
 proved to be woefully deficient in the particular  
 learning requisite for their undertaking; and what  
 was most unexpected and most galling, they found  
 the weapons of satire and railery, their main reliance,  
 retorted with success upon themselves. All that they  
 could do was to annex to the forthcoming publication  
 an appendix as large as the book itself, contesting, in  
 the name and on behalf of Bennet, Dr. Bentley's  
 narrative of the King's manuscript. This wearisome  
 and revolting detail does not materially impugn the  
 Doctor's statement; while it shows the anxiety of his



CHAP. VI. 1699. • opponents to shift the dispute to a ground, on which they thought a better stand might be made than on questions of learning. The bookseller eagerly caught at the opportunity of making himself a prominent figure in an affair, which brought him notoriety and customers. Dr. King, (who was perhaps the writer of Bennet's *Vindication*), introduces himself into the appendix in a very ludicrous plight. His wretched tale of overhearing one day some of Bentley's discourse, had been treated in the latter's preface with merited contempt; and the tale-bearer himself, who was best known as the author of the '*Journey to London*,' a parody on Dr. Lister's '*Journey to Paris*,' was made to feel in his turn the smart of ridicule:

"But let us hear," says Bentley, "the Doctor's testimony; the air and spirit of it is so extraordinary, the virulency and insolence so far above the common pitch, that it puts one in mind of *Rupilius King*, a great ancestor of the Doctor's, commended to posterity by Horace, under this honourable character:

"*Proscripti Regis Rupili pus atque venenum:*"

The filth and venom of *Rupilius King*.

And if the Doctor do not inherit the estate of *Rupilius*, yet the whole world must allow that he is heir of his virtues, as his own writings will vouch for him, his deposition here against me, his buffoonery upon the learned Dr. Lister, and some other monuments of his learning and his morals." P. xxviii. And again: "But we must not expect from the Doctor that he should know the *worth of books*; for he is better skilled in his catalogue of his ales, his *humtie-dumtie*, *hug-matee*, *three-threads*, and the rest of that glorious list, than in the catalogues of MSS." P. xxxiii.

These and some other hits came home to the civilian, who, like other jesters, could not endure to have the laugh turned against himself; and in his reply, while he strives to be witty, he only shows that he is immoderately angry<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> *Short Account of Dr. Bentley's Humanity and Justice, &c.* p. 135.



This book appears to have been on every account unworthy of a reply : but a reply it immediately met with. Bentley had now placed himself on such an eminence, that people were no longer afraid to be seen combating in his cause. The advocate who on this occasion volunteered his services, is said to have been Mr. Solomon Whateley, of Magdalene College, Oxford, the same who had lately translated the Epistles of Phalaris into English<sup>27</sup>. His defence is insufferably long-winded and tedious, and although the arguments are correct, yet the author's plan of spreading over more than two hundred pages a trivial and unfruitful question, is sufficient to surfeit the most determined lover of controversy. Bentley's book called forth another pamphlet, entitled '*A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Bentley upon the Controversie between him and Mr. Boyle,*' written in a moderate tone, and complimentary to our critic, but exhorting him not to continue the dispute, as it was unsuitable for a divine, and as Mr. Boyle was a gentleman of merit, and, moreover, related to the great philosopher. To give a specimen of this author's ratiocination; he contends, that injury is done to literature by proving books not to proceed from the great men to whom they are attributed, since the value of the work is frequently estimated by the name which it bears : an argument which tells in an exactly opposite direction to that which he designed. Of this tract the only remarkable circumstance is, that it has, I believe, escaped the notice of all persons who have given a history, or a list of the pieces produced by this memorable controversy.

CHAP. VI.  
1699.

Refutation  
of this  
pamphlet.

Another  
anonymous  
tract.

<sup>27</sup> The title is, *An Answer to a late Book written against the Learned and Reverend Dr. B. relating to some MS. Notes on Callimachus, together with an Examination of Mr. Bennet's Appendix to the said Book.* London, 8vo. 1699.



## CHAP. VI.

1699.

Bishop  
Lloyd's  
publication  
on the age  
of Pytha-  
goras.

About the same time there appeared another letter addressed to our critic, of a very different character. At the conclusion of his arguments respecting the age of Phalaris and of Pythagoras, wherein he combated the opinions of Dodwell, Bentley had expressed a wish to refer those nice questions to the judgment of Bishop Lloyd, whom he considered the highest authority upon subjects of that nature. The appeal was immediately attended to; and the learned prelate published a full statement of all particulars which he deemed well authenticated, respecting the lives of 'Pythagoras and other famous men his contemporaries;' along with their dates and the reasons for his reliance upon each. To this chronological detail he prefixed an essay in the form of a dedicatory 'Epistle to the Rev. Dr. Bentley:' an honour which must be considered not the least of the rewards obtained by the Dissertation on Phalaris.

Respecting Pythagoras, the Bishop observes:

"Of those many eminent writers that have employed their pens on this subject, there are three that have given us his history at large, Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry, and Jamblichus. These three have, I believe, culled out all that was remarkable in any of the rest: and the two last were his great admirers, who would not omit any thing that might make for his glory <sup>28</sup>."

He then gives a full and clear account of Porphyry and Jamblichus, as well as their monstrous and fabulous narratives respecting Pythagoras. Those writers were determined enemies of Christianity, and laboured to discredit the history of our Saviour's life, by publishing extravagant details of the life of that philo-

<sup>28</sup> *Chronological Account of the Life of Pythagoras and of other famous men his Contemporaries. With an Epistle to the Rev. Dr. Bentley about Porphyry's and Jamblichus's Lives of Pythagoras. By the Right Reverend Father in God William, Lord Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, p. iv.*



sopher, and representing it as no less miraculous than the Gospel history ; in hopes that men, not examining the different nature of the evidence on which the two narratives rested, might regard them both as equally incredible. He explains also the similar attempt made by Philostratus in his life of Apollonius of Tyana. Bishop Lloyd's essay is well executed, and exhibits so much learning applied to an important purpose, that it seems a matter of regret that it should not be more generally known.

CHAP. VI.  
1699.

Bentley's first patron, the excellent and accomplished Bishop Stillingfleet, had been for a long time in a precarious state from an inveterate gout ; which now fixed upon his stomach, and put a period to his existence. As he had maintained a long and painful conflict with this disease, it is hardly necessary to refute the assertion of Whiston, that his end was hastened by mortification at the ill success of his last controversy with Locke : nor should I have mentioned it at all, had he not quoted Bentley as his authority<sup>29</sup> ; whereas a letter, still in existence, shows that the latter attributed his patron's danger to its real cause<sup>30</sup>. Indeed, without assigning to him wilful misrepresentation, it is proper to caution the reader against giving credit to Whiston's narratives. Not only the inaccuracy of his memory, but the mist of prejudice through which he regarded every person and every topic, may be observed in all his gossiping anecdotes. He perpetually confounds both dates and persons ; and generally appears to substitute for the sentiments of others his own interpretation of what he had heard : accordingly, few of his stories will bear

Death of  
Bishop Stil-  
lingfleet.  
March 27.

<sup>29</sup> Whiston ; *Memoirs of his Life*, vol.i. p. 251.

<sup>30</sup> Bentley in a letter to his brother, James Bentley, written in February, 1699, says, " The Bishop of Worcester, my old patron, who is now at London, lies very sick, and I fear he will hardly recover."



CHAP. VI. the test of examination. In the controversy with  
1699. Locke, the Bishop of Worcester had certainly been hasty in attributing to that philosopher opinions which could not fairly be inferred from his writings; and, consequently, his success was not that which had attended his other performances. But it is impossible to imagine that any chagrin at Locke's vindication of himself could have affected so philosophical and religious a mind as that of Stillingfleet.

Bentley was proud of expressing the veneration with which he regarded his patron: having occasion to mention him immediately before the Bishop's death, he uses these remarkable expressions:

"I shall always esteem it both my honour and happiness to have spent fourteen years of my life in his family and acquaintance, whom even envy itself will allow to be the glory of our church and nation; who by his vast and comprehensive genius, is as great in all parts of learning, as the greatest next himself are in any." Pref. to *Dissert.* p. lxxviii.

Inscription  
on his mo-  
nument.

The remains of the deceased Bishop being conveyed to Worcester and interred in the Cathedral, a monument was erected over them by his son, James Stillingfleet, who was then Prebendary, and afterwards Dean of that Church: the inscription, which was written by Dr. Bentley, continues to be admired for its eloquence and propriety, among the ornaments of that venerable structure<sup>31</sup>.

His library.

It was Bentley's first object to secure the valuable library of the Bishop, with the riches of which he was so well acquainted, as an accession to that under his own care: accordingly we find solicitations made for its purchase by the Crown; and, connected with this proposal, Bentley's old scheme was revived, of procuring an apartment to be built for the library in

<sup>31</sup> The reader will not be displeased to see this monumental eulogium:  
 [H. S. E.]



St. James's Park. His ever-active friend Evelyn CHAP. VI.  
1699. again endeavoured to interest the Archbishop of Canterbury in favour of the measure <sup>32</sup>. But this scheme not appearing likely to succeed, he had recourse to a different expedient, and recommended the purchase of the library for the Royal Society: here also the assistance of the King's bounty was requisite: and when we consider how many great and distinguished persons were interested in effecting this object, and particularly that the Lord Chancellor Somers was then President of the Society, we are apt to wonder that it should not have succeeded <sup>33</sup>. But it seems

H. S. E.

EDVARDUS STILLINGFLEET, S.T.P.

EX DECANO ECCLESIAE PAULINAE EPISCOPUS VIGORNIENSIS,

JAM TIBI, QUICUNQUE HÆC LEGES,

NISI ET EUROPÆ ET LITERATI ORBIS HOSPES ES,

IPSE PER SE NOTUS:

DUM REBUS MORTALIBUS INTERFUIT,

ET SANCTITATE MORUM, ET ORIS STATURÆQUE DIGNITATE,

ET CONSUMMATÆ ERUDITIONIS LAUDE,

UNDIQUE VENERANDUS.

CUI IN HUMANIORIBUS LITERIS CRITICI, IN DIVINIS THEOLOGI,

IN RECONDITA HISTORIA ANTIQUARI, IN SCIENTIIS PHILOSOPHI,

IN LEGUM PERITIA JURISCONSULTI, IN CIVILI PRUDENTIA POLITICI,

IN ELOQUENTIA UNIVERSI

FASCES ULTRO SUBMISERUNT.

MAJOR UNUS IN HIS OMNIBUS, QUAM ALII IN SINGULIS.

UT BIBLIOTHECAM SUAM, CUI PAREM ORBIS VIX HABUIT,

INTRA PECTUS OMNIS DOCTRINÆ CAPAX

GESTASSE INTEGRAM VISUS SIT;

QUÆ TAMEN NULLOS LIBROS NOVERAT MELIORES,

QUAM QUOS IPSE MULTOS SCRIPSIT EDIDITQUE,

ECCLESIAE ANGLICANÆ DEFENSOR SEMPER INVICTUS.

<sup>32</sup> *Evelyn's Memoirs*, April 29, 1699. "I dined with the Archbishop, but my business was to get him to persuade the King to purchase the late Bishop of Worcester's library; and build a place for his own library at St. James's, in the Park, the present one being too small."

<sup>33</sup> Bentley, in a note to Evelyn, of May 3, 1699, thus opens to him the topic: "I come now to wait upon you with a request that you would meet



CHAP. VI.  
1699.

that, in spite of such powerful interest, the claims of economy were more listened to than those of literature; and Bentley had the mortification to see this noble collection carried out of the island. It was bought by the private purse of a liberal and spirited Irish prelate, Dr. Narcissus Marsh, then newly appointed to the archbishoprick of Dublin; who devoted his purchase to the purpose of founding a public library in that metropolis<sup>34</sup>.

Bentley's  
complete  
victory.

Bentley was now left to enjoy the triumph of his learning and sagacity, to which even the most averse were compelled to pay homage: and what was a still more important result of his book, he had silenced and put to shame the slanderous attacks made upon his character. Upon the various matters of this celebrated controversy, his victory was complete and final, and he was left in undisputed possession of the field. A declaration was indeed made by his adversaries of their intention to publish a complete reply to his book; but this was an empty vaunt; they felt their inability to renew the conflict upon questions of learning; and it was the course of prudence not to recall public attention to the dispute. It may be remarked, that no one of the Boylean confederacy ever again appeared before the world as a critic. Atterbury, their leader, immediately afterwards found business of a different character, a defence of the rights of the Convocation, in which he acquitted

Sir Robert Southron, Sir Christopher Wren, and other friends, at Pontac's to day at dinner; to make an act of council at Gresham College, to desire our president, and the late president, to obtain a public library for the Royal Society. I beg of you not to fail us before two o'clock there." The result of this meeting is mentioned in *Evelyn's Memoirs*, May 3, 1699: "At a meeting of the Royal Society I was nominated to be of the committee to wait upon the Lord Chancellor to move the King to purchase the Bishop of Worcester's library."

<sup>34</sup> See a letter of Archbishop Marsh, dated May 4, 1700. *Letters of Eminent Persons*, vol. i. p. 103.



himself with signal ability: though encountered by such opponents as Wake, Kennett, and Gibson, his superiors in antiquarian learning, he established his reputation as a spirited and powerful controversialist, and was from that time looked upon as the ablest champion of the High Church party in the kingdom.

Of all Bentley's enemies, Dr. King appears to have been most severely galled by the chastisement which he experienced, and laboured to revenge himself, by turning the critic into ridicule, in his ten 'Dialogues of the Dead;' which, by his own confession, he 'wrote to divert his spleen.' The subject of all these performances is Bentley and the controversy. His banter, though occasionally humorous, is upon the whole tiresome and palling; and the work produces the same effect as the travesty of a poem, in showing the high opinion really entertained of the original. Dr. King styles our critic *Bentivoglio*, a nick-name which we find adhering to him afterwards as long as he lived <sup>35</sup>.

CHAP. VI.  
1699.  
King's Dialogues of the Dead.

<sup>35</sup> The following passage of a dialogue between Lilly and Helvicus is a favourable specimen of the civilian's banter:—

"HELV. Why in such a passion, brother Lilly?

"LILLY. Brother Lilly!—You make very free with me. I am none of your brother! The great Bentivoglio may indeed call me brother, since the publication of his eternal labours. He equals the Chronological Tables that I yearly published; and then he is so exact a man at the original of a Sicilian city, that, amidst never so great variety of authors, he can tell you the man who laid the first stone of it. There was not a potter in Athens, or a brazier in Corinth, but he knows when he set up, and who took out a statute of bankrupt against him.

"HELV. Why this is great learning indeed!

"LILLY. Why so it is, Sir. Do you know whether Thericles made glass or earthenware, or what Olympiad he lived in?

"HELV. Truly, not I! But do the fortunes of Greece depend upon it?

"LILLY. Thus you would encourage ignorance! My brother Bentivoglio and I have studied many years upon things of less importance, some of which I shall name to you; as, that carp and hops came into England the same year with heresy;—that the first weathercock was set up, on the tomb of Zethys and Calais, sons of Boreas, in the time of the Argonautic expedition;—that Mrs. Turner brought up the fashion of yellow starch;—



## CHAP. VI.

1699.

The prejudices excited by party and fashion are never easily overcome. Of this fact there appears a remarkable instance in the popular opinion prevalent in England for at least fifty years, that the controversy on Phalaris was one upon which great learning and wit had been bestowed, but which after all left the point in dispute undecided. Among persons whose judgment upon such questions could be of any value, the case was different: by them the triumph of Dr. Bentley was deemed as complete, as his learning, wit, and ingenuity were admirable: and it was not long before he experienced a signal proof of the impression created in his favour.

that the Sybarites first laid rose-cakes and lavender among their linen;—that Sardanapalus was the inventor of cushions, which never before this last century have been improved into easy chairs, by the metamorphosis of cast mantuas and petticoats, to the ruin of chamber-maids.—And yet we thought our time well spent, I must tell you.

“HELIV. Are any of these things in Usher’s ‘Annals,’ or Simpson’s ‘Chronicon?’

“LILLY. Perhaps not. But we stand upon their shoulders, and therefore see things with greater exactness. Perhaps never man came to the same pitch of chronology as the much esteemed Bentivoglio. He has gotten the true standard by which to judge of the Grecian time: ‘He knows the age of any Greek word unless it be in the Greek Testament:’ and can tell you the time a man lived in, by reading a page of his book, as easily as I could have told an oyster-woman’s fortune when my hand was crost with a piece of silver.

“HELIV. This is admirable! Why then, it seems, words have their chronology, and phrases their rise and fall, as well as the Four Monarchies.

“LILLY. Very right; let Bentivoglio but get a sentence of Greek in his mouth, and turn it once or twice upon his tongue; and he as well knows the growth of it, as a vintner does Burgundy from Madeira.”—*King’s Works*, Dialogue VII. vol. i. p. 161.



## CHAPTER VII.

*Bentley made Master of Trinity College, Cambridge—History of the College—Its great fame and prosperity—Its decline—The probable causes—Bentley's appointment unpopular—The Duke of Gloucester—Bentley's first step upon his admission—Repairs of the Master's Lodge—Bentley elected Vice-Chancellor—His Marriage—Vindicates the rights of the University—A Greek Archbishop created D.D.—Address to the King—Ludolf Kuster—His edition of Suidas—Bentley made Archdeacon of Ely—Member of Convocation—University Press—General Election—Bentley undertakes to publish Horace—Death of Grævius—Elections in Trinity College—The Master's regulations—Measures of discipline—Care of the College Library—Graduates in Divinity—Dissention among the Fellows—Declamations—Offence given by the Master—Expensive repairs—New Staircase—College Preachers—Sequel of the Phalaris controversy—Publications of Atterbury—Dodwell—Swift—Wotton.*

WE have already noticed that during the life-time of CHAP. VII.  
Queen Mary, the Church preferment in the gift of the 1700.  
Crown was generally left to her disposal. Soon after  
the loss of his Queen, King William was induced to  
appoint a Commission, consisting of the six most dis-  
tinguished prelates on the Bench, who were to recom- April 7,  
mend fit persons to supply all vacant bishopricks, 1696.  
deaneries, and other preferments, as well as headships  
and professorships of the two Universities, in the  
Royal patronage. The persons invested with this  
trust were the Archbishops Tenison and Sharp,  
Bishops Lloyd of Coventry and Lichfield, Burnet of  
Sarum, Stillingfleet of Worcester, and Patrick of  
Ely; after Stillingfleet's death, another Commission  
was issued, substituting in his place Moore the Bishop  
of Norwich<sup>1</sup>. Upon the vacancy of the deanery of

<sup>1</sup> The copy of this Commission, dated May 9, 1699, is given at length in *Le Neve's Lives of the Protestant Archbishops*, p. 247. No Commission of this nature has been issued by any monarch since King William.



CHAP.VII. 1700. Durham in the latter part of 1699, Dr. John Montague, the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, was promoted to that dignity; and the Commissioners unanimously recommended Dr. Bentley to the vacant headship of Trinity College.

Bentley  
made  
Master of  
Trinity  
College,  
Cambridge.

There could scarcely be a better testimony of the opinion entertained of our hero by the heads of the Church, than the important and dignified charge thus confided to his administration. And it might be supposed that no appointment could be more agreeable to the feelings and taste of a scholar; not merely on account of high rank and influence in a learned body, but from the opportunity which it conferred of promoting literature by the encouragement of merit and of talents.

History of  
the College.

The College over which Bentley was called to preside may be considered as the first-fruits of the Reformation. It was founded by King Henry the Eighth about one month before his death, and endowed with revenues taken from the dissolved monasteries. Its earlier years were somewhat clouded by the struggles between the popish and reformed Churches; but upon the accession of Elizabeth the foundation was completed and placed upon its present liberal footing; giving ample encouragement to the pursuit both of ornamental and useful knowledge, and opening the emoluments of the college as rewards to the merit of the students in the most unrestricted manner. Accordingly we find that Trinity College rose at once from the infancy to the maturity of its fame: and from that epoch to the civil troubles in the reign of Charles the First, a period of little more than eighty years, it flourished in a manner unexampled in the history of academical institutions. The illustrious names of Lord Bacon and Sir Edward Coke stand at the head of a list of its members dis-

Its great  
fame and  
prosperity.



tinguished in the theatre of public life. During the reigns of Elizabeth and James the First, a period when extraordinary attention was shown to merit in ecclesiastical appointments, a greater number of Bishops proceeded from this, than from any other society; and it was observed about the beginning of the 17th century, that Trinity College might claim at the same time the two Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and no less than seven other principal prelates on the English Bench<sup>2</sup>. So greatly did theological learning flourish here, that when the present Translation of the Bible was executed by order of James the First, no less than six of the translators were found among the resident Fellows of this College<sup>3</sup>. In elegant literature it claims an equal celebrity; having, in addition to many of the Elizabethan poets, produced those two constellations of wit and learning, John Donne and Abraham Cowley<sup>4</sup>; while it boasts,

CHAP.VII.  
1700.

<sup>2</sup> The following is an extract from a Memorial of Dr. Nevile, Master of Trinity, in the reign of King James I.

“ Within the suggestor’s remembrance, besides Doctors in all faculties, to the number of at least 60, Deans to the number of 11, Public Professors to the number of 10, the two Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Most Rev. Fathers Whitgift and Hutton, and seven other principal Prelates, viz. Fletcher of London, Still of Bath and Wells, Babington of Worcester, Redman of Norwich, Rudd of St. David’s, Bennet of Hereford, and Goldsborough of Gloucester; all of them, *simul et semel*, Bishops of this kingdom, since and under the reign of our now most gracious Sovereign (except London and Norwich, who died not long before) are such an instance, as we think no other College can afford the like; and not one of them chosen out of Westminster School.”—*Carter’s Hist. of Cambridge*, p. 349.

<sup>3</sup> The fellows of Trinity College employed in the Translation of the Bible were, 1. Edward Lively, Professor of Hebrew. 2. Jeremiah Radcliffe. 3. Thomas Harrison. 4. John Overall, Professor of Divinity. 5. John Layfield. 6. William Dakins. Dr. John Richardson, Master of the College, was also one of the translators; but he was not appointed Master till the work was completed.

<sup>4</sup> The fact of Cowley being of this College, his biographer Dr. Samuel Johnson chooses to omit: he was elected Fellow in 1640, being then a junior Bachelor; in 1643 he was ejected by the Puritans for refusing the Covenant: but he recovered his fellowship after the Restoration.



CHAP.VII. in the next generation, the still more illustrious name  
1700. of Dryden. So high was its reputation during the period of which we are speaking, that Fellows of this society were chosen to fill the headships of the majority of other Colleges in the University<sup>5</sup>.

Its decline.

The civil troubles, and the intolerance of the Puritans, brought ruin and confusion upon this as well as other societies: all the Royalist Fellows were expelled, along with Dr. Thomas Comber, the Master, one of the most exemplary characters that ever presided over a college. The Restoration did not bring back the prosperity or the spirit that had been banished by the evil times; nor could the society recover the paramount station which it had so long maintained. There were, indeed, some circumstances peculiarly auspicious to Trinity College. Dr. John Pearson and Dr. Isaac Barrow, two of the brightest characters which grace the period of Charles the Second, were successively Masters. In the meantime, the fabric nearly attained to the state in which it continued till the year 1824; the beautiful quadrangle, half of which had been built in the mastership of Dr. Thomas Nevile, the Dean of Peterborough, and in a great degree at his own cost, was now completed by the munificence of two restored Fellows, Sir Thomas Sclater, and Dr. Humphrey Babington;

<sup>5</sup> William Glynne, was made President of Queen's College; Matthew Hutton, Master of Pembroke Hall; Nicholas Sheppard, Master of St. John's College; Thomas Legge, Master of Caius; William Whytaker, Master of St. John's; John Copcot, Master of Corpus Christi; John Overall, Master of Catherine Hall; Francis Aldrich, Master of Sidney College; Robert Scott, Master of Clare Hall. Two other Fellows of Trinity of this period, James Duport and Francis Wilsford were after the Restoration made Masters of Magdalene and Corpus Christi. To this list of Fellows of Trinity, who became Heads of other Colleges, may be added Walter Travers, Provost of Trinity College, Dublin; Matthew Sutcliffe, Founder and Head of Chelsea College; and Charles Chauncy, Head of Harvard College, in New England.



and the noble library, an edifice unrivalled for magnificence and convenience, was erected by a subscription of the members, under the auspices of Dr. Barrow. Above all, the presence and example of Sir Isaac Newton might have been expected to sustain the spirit of a college, the scene of all his great discoveries, of which he continued many years a resident Fellow. In spite of these advantages, the house was observed to decline in numbers and celebrity in the latter years of the seventeenth century; and it happened at the crisis of which we are speaking, that the list of its Fellows was more destitute of distinguished names than at any preceding or any subsequent period.

To what such a state of things was owing, must not be hastily pronounced. The reason assigned by Bentley for the decline of the Society was the disuse of theological degrees among the Fellows; a cause insufficient of itself to produce such an effect. The following facts may account for it more satisfactorily: first, the acknowledged relaxation of discipline under the two last Masters, Dr. North and Dr. Montague, had produced its never-failing consequences, in impairing both decorum and literature: secondly, that distinguishing principle of Trinity College, admission to the founder's bounty upon the score of merit alone, had experienced an interruption in the times of civil discord, when Fellows were appointed by the nomination of parliamentary commissioners, and subsequently of the Protector. After the Restoration, Charles the Second being probably urged to assume the same patronage as had been exercised by the Usurper, frequently sent Royal mandates for elections to fellowships; which, though plainly contrary to their statutes, the Society were constrained to obey. In the short reign of James the Second this exercise

The probable causes.



CHAP. VII. of arbitrary power was carried still further, *every*  
1700. vacancy among the fellowships being filled by mandatory letters from the King. Although the College was delivered by the Revolution from future invasions of its privileges, yet some of the intruded Fellows having obtained office by their seniority, and not being indebted to industry or learning for their own preferment, wanted both ability and disposition to encourage those qualifications in others. A third cause of the depressed and languid state of Trinity College, may be found in the prevalent distaste for the old system of academical study; people had begun to neglect and despise the learning of the schoolmen, before a more vigorous and manly system of instruction had been substituted. This happened to be the intermediate state of torpor; and the College disputations, exercises in which members of all ages used to display their ingenuity, were now much neglected, being frequently performed by deputy, and disposed of in a superficial and unedifying manner.

Bentley's  
 appointment un-  
 popular.

For these evils no better remedy could have been devised than the appointment of a Master possessed of talents, energy, and reputation; and this was the sole motive for the arrangement which placed Bentley at the head of Trinity College. The measure was so well intended, and so honourable to its authors, that it is painful to find it not productive of all the good effects which they contemplated. But in making this selection some material circumstances appear to have been overlooked. Bentley had no previous connection with the College which he was sent to govern; he was himself educated in another and a rival society; and, not having resided at Cambridge since he reached manhood, he was unacquainted with the business as well as feelings of the place, and destitute of all the peculiar information which the Head of a College



ought to possess. Far from cherishing that attachment to his society which is generally observed to overcome all other feelings among the governors of our colleges, Bentley regarded with contempt the Fellows over whom he was to preside; and the preferment itself he seems to have valued chiefly on account of its income, and as a step in the ladder of advancement. On the other hand, his appointment was unpopular in the Society, to whom he was known only by his reputation as a critic and controversialist, and who were chagrined at not seeing one of their own College placed at their head<sup>6</sup>. Besides overlooking these circumstances, his patrons were not aware that there were certain defects in his character, which made him a person not to be safely trusted with authority. Hitherto the reader has seen him pass clear and unsullied through no common ordeal, and put to shame the attacks of jealous and envious adversaries: in the remainder of his history there will be found much to regret, and much to condemn.

At the time of his appointment it was intended that the Duke of Gloucester, son of the Princess Anne, and Heir Apparent to the throne, should be educated at Trinity College, under the immediate care of the new Master. Great were the hopes entertained of this amiable young prince by all parties in the nation: but it happened in this, as in many similar instances, that the expectations of the English people, when most strongly excited, were destined to be disap-  
The Duke  
of Gloucester.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Gale, the Dean of York, formerly Fellow of Trinity College, and Greek Professor of the University, had aspired to succeed Dr. Montague in the mastership, as appears from a letter of his to his friend Mr. Pepys. March 18, 1698: "I am told Dr. Montague will be Bishop of Worcester: when that shall happen, might not a friend of yours hope to be removed southward to Trin. Coll.?" *Pepys's Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 164.



CHAP.VII. pointed by the premature death of their beloved  
1700. object <sup>7</sup>.

Dr. Bentley  
installed  
Master.

On the first of February, 1699—1700, Dr. Bentley was installed Master; having first taken the oath to preserve unbroken the statutes of the College, and to consult the common benefit rather than his private interests. Tradition says that, being congratulated upon a promotion so little to have been expected by a member of St. John's, he replied, in the words of the Psalmist, "By the help of my God, I have leaped over the wall <sup>8</sup>."

Bentley's  
first step  
upon his  
admission.

His first step on entering into the office was of a very inauspicious description. A dividend from the surplus money had been fixed, in December 1699, to be paid, agreeably to the custom of the College, to the Master and Fellows, for the year ending at Michaelmas. The Master's share, amounting to 170*l.*, was clearly due to Dr. Montague, whose resignation took place in November; but by some accident it had not yet been disbursed to him. Bentley, immediately upon his admission, claimed this sum, as being profits accruing during the vacancy, and therefore payable to the new Master; and by dint of terrifying the bursar, or treasurer, who declined paying it, with a threat to bring him before the Archbishop

<sup>7</sup> William, Duke of Gloucester, died July 29, 1700. For an account of this young prince, see *Bishop Burnet's History of his own Times*, vol. ii. p. 245.

<sup>8</sup> Another traditionary anecdote, preserved in Dr. Bentley's family, is this: "Bishop Stillingfleet said, We must send Bentley to rule the turbulent Fellows of Trinity College: if any body can do it, he is the person; for I am sure that he has ruled my family ever since he entered it." The truth of this story is overset by a reference to dates. Stillingfleet was dead many months before the vacancy; and the 'turbulence' of the Fellows has an evident allusion to transactions which occurred several years later. It is allowed on all hands that, before Bentley's appointment, the Society had been perfectly tranquil.



of Canterbury, he actually obtained the money. In making this claim he was misled by a reference to the case of parochial preferment, where the successor is always entitled to the arrears during the vacancy. But in the present instance, the sums from whence the dividend was made, had all been received in Dr. Montague's time. Besides, a case precisely similar had occurred in Trinity College little more than twenty years before, when Dr. North gave up the dividend to the executors of his predecessor, Dr. Barrow; and a College order was made to regulate and decide such questions for the future. Bentley at the same time demanded and enforced payment of other dues, amounting to 110*l*. which had become payable at St. Thomas's-day preceding. For this claim he had stronger grounds; though, to say the least, it was injudicious to assert it against the opinions and feelings of the Society: but to the dividend he had not the shadow of a right; and his predecessor declared his intention of commencing a suit against the College, if it was withheld from him. Bentley throughout life was too obstinate in maintaining a point to which he had once committed himself. The matter remained in controversy about two years, when a compromise was effected. The Dean of Durham allowed the 170*l*. to remain in Bentley's hands, as a gift to the College, to be expended in purchasing furniture for the Master's lodge: and the thanks of the Society were given to him for this benefaction, and entered in the register by the Master's hand. Through this handsome conduct of the Dean the dispute was amicably settled: an impression, however, was produced not favourable to the new Master; and unfortunately his subsequent conduct had no tendency to remove the prejudice thus excited against him.

 CHAP.VII.  
1700.

 April 16,  
1702.



## CHAP. VII.

1700.

Repairs of  
the Master's  
lodge.

The Master's lodge, a spacious and noble habitation, was in want of considerable repair, no material work having been bestowed upon it for about sixty years. The state of the floors and ceilings made it expedient that there should be no longer delay; and it was natural that a new Head should, at his first coming, wish his house to be suitably repaired and ornamented. Bentley applied for this purpose to the eight Senior Fellows, a body to whom, in conjunction with the Master, the government of the College and the disposal of its revenues are entrusted. To induce them to consent to a thorough reparation of the lodge at the College expense, he urged the propriety of its being fitted up previously to the coming of the Duke of Gloucester, their future sovereign. The cost, he said, would not exceed 300*l.*; and declared that he would himself contribute 100*l.* towards it. The Seniors readily and handsomely assented; making no difficulty or demur upon any point, except that some thought it wrong to permit a charge required for the credit and dignity of the whole Society, to fall even in part upon the private purse of the Master. An order was accordingly entered in the College register<sup>9</sup> by Dr. Bentley, and subscribed at his request by the whole meeting, directing in general terms that the lodge should be 'repaired and finished with new ceiling, wainscot, flooring, and *other convenient improvements,*' but without naming any limit to the

<sup>9</sup> April 11, 1700. "Agreed then by the Master and Seniors, that the *Master's Lodge* be repaired and finished with new ceiling, wainscot, flooring, and other convenient improvements; towards which expense the Master will contribute *de proprio* the sum of one hundred pounds sterling.

R. BENTLEY, *Mag. Collegii.*

THOS. BAINBRIGGS, D.D.

WILL. CORKER.

JOHN EKINS.

W. STUBBE, D.D.

EDW. CHESTER.

GEO. MODD.

EDW. BATHURST.

NAT. RASHLEIGH."



expense, or specifying what 'other improvements' were deemed 'convenient.' I am thus particular in the detail of this transaction, as it afterwards became the subject of a serious charge against the Master, that he had artfully worded the order in such general terms as left the extent of the work to his own discretion, and that he had, contrary to the practice, induced the Seniors, by the subscription of their names, to commit themselves for the payment of the expense. The latter step however he probably adopted from the custom of his Chapter at Worcester; and in an undertaking of magnitude it seems no more than a measure of prudence. The cost of the whole work, exceeding 1600*l.*, caused excessive dissatisfaction and clamour: but it does not appear to have been executed with extravagance; nor can we, after a careful examination, see reason for believing that Bentley was actuated by bad faith. That he had ever said the expense would not exceed 300*l.* he denied, and commented on the improbability and absurdity of the assertion; but as the evidence of several persons proves that he did actually name that sum to the Meeting, it is to be concluded that he was speaking only of a part of the work. Some of the Seniors must have possessed sufficient knowledge of such matters to be aware that a thorough repair of so large a building could not be effected at so small a cost. It does not appear that any scruple was made at the outset of the undertaking, or that workmen were called upon for an estimate of the expense. In short, the confidence reposed in the Master's discretion was absolute and unlimited.

As the lodge is now nearly in the state into which it was brought by these repairs, we have clear evidence that no inappropriate or extravagant alterations were admitted. In all the rooms wainscot was sub-



CHAP. VII. stituted for the antiquated and decaying tapestry.

1700.

Here Bentley complied with the fashion of the day<sup>10</sup>; as he did likewise in the introduction of marble chimney-pieces and sash-windows. In the last particular only there seems to have been just ground for complaint; since these windows not only occasioned a great cost, but were a blemish to the Gothic character of the noble quadrangle. He alleged in defence of this alteration, for which his taste as well as economy were impeached, that there was already a want of uniformity in the court, no two sides being exactly alike, and that sash windows were desirable, as giving greater light to rooms which were not less than twenty-five feet in depth.

Nov. 4.

1700.

Bentley  
elected Vice  
Chancellor.

In the first year of his mastership, Dr. Bentley became Vice Chancellor, being chosen agreeably to the custom of the University, as the senior in degree among the Heads of Colleges who had not already served that office. This choice of the chief magistrate according to his standing, not as a Head, but as a graduate, is so palpably inconvenient, that it is astonishing the practice should have been so long continued. It occasionally happens, as in the present instance, that a person who has not resided in the University for many years, and has little or no knowledge of its business and customs, immediately upon being appointed to preside over a College, finds himself invested with the government of the whole body, and the management of its revenues, business, and discipline; and, ere he has become properly acquainted with the duties of his station, his term of office has expired. Owing probably to his inexperience in University business, very few matters of importance were transacted during the year of Bent-

<sup>10</sup> Only the dining-room was wainscoted with oak.



ley's Vice-chancellorship. I find him charged with not exercising the hospitalities expected from his high office <sup>11</sup>; a circumstance which, if true, must be attributed to the state of his lodge, which continued during the whole year in the hands of workmen.

CHAP.VII.  
 1700.

Bentley was indeed a good deal absent from the University this year, from causes of another kind. He had long cherished an attachment for Mrs. Joanna Bernard, a lady who had been a visitor in Bishop Stillingfleet's family. She was daughter of Sir John Bernard, of Brampton, in Huntingdonshire. Being now raised to a station of dignity and consequence, he succeeded in obtaining the object of his affections, and was united to her at Windsor <sup>12</sup>; having previously obtained a Royal dispensation under the Great Seal for the violation of Queen Elizabeth's statutes, which enjoin celibacy to the Master as well as the Fellows of Trinity College. This marriage appears to have been eminently happy: the lady who continued the partaker of his joys and sorrows for nearly forty years is described as possessing the most amiable and valuable qualities. She had a cultivated mind, and was sincerely benevolent and religious. Whiston relates that Bentley during his courtship was in danger of losing her, from insinuating doubts of the authority of the book of Daniel; a story exceedingly improbable, which, if it ever had any foundation, has been distorted from the truth, according to the prac-

Bentley's  
 marriage.

Jan. 4,  
 1701.

Character  
 of Mrs.  
 Bentley.

<sup>11</sup> A MS. letter in the Bodleian, from Mr. Wm. Bishop, dated Chelsea, July 10, 1701, makes a bitter mention of this supposed parsimony of the Vice Chancellor.

<sup>12</sup> Memorandum from Bentley's Ephemeris for the year 1701. "*Jan. 4.* I married Mrs. Joanna Bernard, daughter of Sir John Bernard, Baronet — Dr. Richardson, Fellow of Eton College, and Master of Peterhouse, married us at Windsor in the College Chapel."—" *Jan. 6.* I brought my wife to St. James's."



CHAP.VII. tice of that hearsay narrator<sup>13</sup>. The alliance with  
1701. Mrs. Bentley, whose family connections were nu-

merous and distinguished, was the means of securing him powerful protection at critical periods of his life; while the excellence of her disposition tended to soften the animosity of his opponents. We find her mentioned with applause and sympathy in publications written for the purpose of injuring the character and fortunes of her husband<sup>14</sup>.

Vindicates  
 the rights  
 of the Uni-  
 versity.  
 Sept. 4,  
 1701.

In the course of Bentley's year of office, he had an opportunity of displaying his spirit and decision in upholding the rights of the University against the mayor and corporation of Cambridge, who had given permission and encouragement to players to perform at Sturbridge fair, without the sanction of the Vice Chancellor, and in defiance of his authority. His vindication of these privileges granted by Charters and Acts of Parliament was essential to the discipline of the place; and we may judge from the practice of subsequent times, that the prompt interference of Dr. Bentley on this occasion was productive of permanent good effects<sup>15</sup>.

A Greek  
 Archbishop  
 created D.D.

Sept. 11.

A Greek Prelate, Neophytos, Archbishop of Philip-  
 popoli, visiting England at this time, came to Cam-  
 bridge, and was presented to a degree of Doctor in  
 Divinity by the University. On this occasion the  
 Vice Chancellor, with great good-nature and pro-

<sup>13</sup> *Whiston's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 95.

<sup>14</sup> See two pamphlets written against Dr. Bentley, *True State of Trinity College*. 1710. p. 17. and *A True and Impartial Account*, &c. 1711. p. 28.

<sup>15</sup> The Grace of the Senate bespeaks the decisive temper of the Vice Chancellor. It enacts that the privileges of the University shall be defended and vindicated at the public charge: and in the meantime, to prevent a breach of discipline, it confers the authority of Proctors during the time of the fair on no less than 62 Masters of Arts; and decrees that whoever disobeys them shall *ipso facto* incur the penalty of expulsion!!



priety, directed that he should be presented by the Greek Professor, Joshua Barnes; who was thus gratified with the opportunity of delivering a Greek oration, a copy of which is still preserved. CHAP.VII.  
1701.

Before the end of his year of office, Bentley had an occasion of declaring his political sentiments, and those of the University, in an address presented to King William upon Louis the Fourteenth's acknowledging the son of James II. as king of England. The address itself is given in a note, as being the undoubted composition of the Vice Chancellor, and expressing his opinion on public affairs in clear and uncompromising terms <sup>16</sup>. Address to  
the King,  
Oct. 14.

Of Bentley's operations at this period, the matter most interesting to posterity is the influence exerted by him over the press of the University. We have seen that to his zeal and services five years before this University  
press.

<sup>16</sup> "May it please your Majesty,

"We your Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of your University of Cambridge, having a just detestation of the indignity offered to your Sacred Majesty, by the French King, in setting up a pretended Prince of Wales, as king of these realms, humbly crave leave on this occasion to assure your Majesty, that from our hearts we own and assert your most just and rightful title to the Crowns of these Kingdoms, and will contribute our utmost to its defence, with all the cheerfulness and affection, that becomes our duty to the best of Kings, and our gratitude to our happy deliverer.

"We can never forget the once deplorable state of the Church and Nation, under the fatal influence of Popish and arbitrary power; when all our prayers and addresses to Heaven were for your Majesty's speedy arrival to rescue us from the imminent dangers of idolatry and slavery. And we are daily sensible, that we entirely owe the safety of our religion and liberties to your auspicious Government. Neither can we doubt but God will still support and enable you, not only to maintain your own Crown and dignity at home, but defend your injured neighbours abroad, and secure the threatened liberty of Europe.

"May the same good Providence, that has hitherto protected you from so many secret and open attempts, preserve and prolong your sacred life, assist and prosper you in all your great and good designs, direct your subjects in Parliament to the wisest and best counsels, and continue these nations under the happy establishment of a Protestant successor."



CHAP. VII.

1701.Ludolf  
Kuster,His edition  
of Suidas.

establishment was indebted for its new types, and was restored to a condition worthy of the place. Already some handsome editions of Latin Classics had been printed with those types, and dedicated to the use of the young Duke of Gloucester. Terence had been edited by Leng of Catharine Hall, afterwards Bishop of Norwich; Horace by Talbot, the Hebrew Professor; Catullus, Tibullus, and Propertius by the Hon. Arthur Annesley, Representative for the University; and Virgil by J. Laughton of Trinity. Bentley, on succeeding to office, resolved to extend the sphere of its utility. Among the many foreigners introduced to his acquaintance by his correspondent Grævius, was the distinguished Ludolf Kuster, a Westphalian, who had lately been appointed by the King of Prussia professor of an academy at Berlin, and obtained permission of travelling to foreign universities. He had already made himself known as a Greek scholar by the press under the title of *Neocorus*<sup>17</sup>. Bentley received him with cordiality and kindness, and induced him to make Cambridge his residence, where he might pursue his studies with the advantage of its libraries and learned society. Kuster having, when at Paris, made collations of three manuscripts of Suidas, undertook a new edition of that Lexicon, to be printed at the Cambridge press: this was done at the persuasion of Bentley, who also engaged the University to bear the expense and risk of the publication. He lent to the editor a body of notes and corrections of Suidas, made by his illustrious predecessor Bishop Pearson, and preserved in Trinity library; he added some emendations of his own, and assisted him with his advice throughout the work. Kuster's ardour and perseverance in this

<sup>17</sup> The word KUSTE (being German for *Sexton*) was properly rendered in Greek by Νεώκορος.



undertaking were extraordinary ; and such was his eagerness to accomplish it, in order to resume his duties at Berlin, that he did not allow himself sufficient time for a performance of so great extent and importance. Scarcely four years elapsed from his taking the work in hand to the publication of the three massy folios ; a period inadequate even to collect and digest the materials, particularly as the innumerable Greek fragments cited by Suidas from all descriptions of writers, many of them corrupt, require a cautious and deliberate judgment. But while we regret the haste in which it was executed, we must allow it to be a noble performance ; and the experience of 120 years has proved its value and utility. Though the precipitation of the editor has left much for succeeding scholars to accomplish, yet every one capable of appreciating what was done, will confess his obligation to Bentley, as the means of this edition being given to the public.

The Doctor continued for several years to interest himself in the affairs of the University press, being generally a member of the Syndicates, or committees, appointed to investigate and conduct particular matters relative to that concern. Much difficulty seems to have been experienced in securing an adequate extent of premises for the operations of printing, and for warehouses ; an object of magnitude and importance, which it has been left to our own times to accomplish. It is to be remarked, however, that this establishment, although endowed with privileges intended to make it an advantage as well as an honour to the University, continued for a long time the occasion of pecuniary loss. The cause, as far as it can now be understood, appears to have been the want of a permanent committee of management ; a measure which, however obvious, was not adopted till many



CHAP.VII. years afterwards. In the meantime, the receipt and  
1701. disbursement of large sums of money, as well as the necessary negotiations with persons of business, were entrusted to the individuals holding the annual office of Vice Chancellor, who generally possessed no previous acquaintance with the concern ; a system which inevitably led to injurious and almost ruinous consequences<sup>18</sup>.

June 1701.  
 Bentley  
 made Arch-  
 deacon of  
 Ely.

Becomes a  
 Member of  
 Convoca-  
 tion.

On the death of Dr. Saywell, Master of Jesus College and Archdeacon of Ely, Bentley was collated to the vacant archdeaconry ; a dignity which besides its rank in the Church, was endowed with the two livings of Haddenham and Wilburton<sup>19</sup>. He had the honour of receiving this preferment from Bishop Patrick, one of the most learned and exemplary prelates that ever graced the Bench. The archdeaconry conferred a seat in the Lower House of Convocation : as the opposition carried on by the majority of that house against the Bishops was just then at its height, it seems probable that a wish to call into action on the other side such talents and spirit as Bentley's might have occasioned this appointment. He was regular in his attendance at the Synod, as long as it was permitted to meet and deliberate ; and he took a share in the debates. Of this fact I find several proofs : nor is there any doubt but that he sided with the court party, who were at that time the minority in

<sup>18</sup> The University does not appear to have been awakened to a right view of this matter till 1737, when a Grace was passed, constituting a Syndicate with plenary power over the affairs of the press for three years. The preamble of this Grace observes: " Cum Prelum Academicum, in usum et commoditatem Academiæ olim destinatum, per quadraginta retro annos ita negligenter fuerit administratum, ut Academiam oneraverit sumptu, ultra bis mille et trecentas libras," &c. The present permanent *Syndicate of the Press* was not established till the year 1782.

<sup>19</sup> MS. note in Dr. Bentley's *Ephemeris* for 1701. " June 24. I was admitted Archdeacon in Ely cathedral by Dr. Fern." It may be observed, that he had resigned his stall at Worcester in May, 1700.



the Lower House : but I am not able to mention any particular instances in which he was distinguished as a member of Convocation. CHAP.VII.  
1701.

At the General Election in November 1701, Dr. Bentley had the satisfaction of assisting in the return of his illustrious friend Sir Isaac Newton as one of the Members for the University : the other successful candidate was Mr. Henry Boyle, afterwards Lord Carleton ; so that on this occasion Trinity College had the honour of supplying the University with both its Representatives. General  
Election.

It was not until the following summer that Dr. Bentley found that leisure for study, which was to be expected as the peculiar advantage of an academical station. The last two years and a half I believe to have been the only period of his life in which he was abstracted from his favourite employment, the critical examination of ancient writers<sup>20</sup>. He now formed the resolution of devoting his literary powers to prepare editions of classical books for the use of the students of his college, and of selecting those authors which were most likely to prove a relief to his own mind when fatigued with cares and business ; particularly such as would bear the interruption of other avocations without injury to the plan of his edition. Accordingly, he determined to commence his scheme with an edi-

<sup>20</sup> In his letter to Grævius, Aug. 20, 1702, Bentley thus expresses himself : “ Cum memoria repeto, Vir amicissime, quantum jam temporis effluxit, ex quo literas de communibus studiis vel ad te misi vel ad ullos eruditorum, quos mare a Britannia nostra separat ; non possum non dammare fatum meum, et annorum duorum et amplius quasi jacturam plorare. Sic enim meæ se res habuerunt, postquam ex jucundissimo otio protractus sum ad splendidam hanc sane et satis opulentam sortem, sed obsessam infinitis negotiis per caput et circa latera quotidie salientibus. Quod ergo interrogas, Quid moliar, quemve authorem, Hesychium, Maniliumve, notis meis illustratum edere parem, scias me toto hoc biennio vix unum et alterum diem vacavisse humanioribus literis : tantum abest, ut dignum aliquid tuis oculis jam a me sit expectandum.”



CHAP. VII.

1702.

Bentley  
undertakes  
to publish  
Horace.  
Aug. 1702.

tion of HORACE ; a choice which peculiarly accorded with his views ; since such are the charms of this poet, that none can be a more agreeable solace of vacant hours ; and so delightful are his writings both to the young and the old, the serious and the gay, that no classical book is so universally read and remembered. As his justly celebrated edition was nearly ten years in preparation, we shall defer our remarks upon its merits for the present. One observation however the first mention of this undertaking inevitably suggests : it is greatly to be regretted, that Bentley should have devoted so large a portion of the best years of his life to a Latin, rather than to a Greek poet : his knowledge and perception of the latter language was incomparably better than of the former ; and he might have been employed more usefully to literature, and more honourably to himself, in correcting real errors in Greek poetry, with a felicity which no one else could attain, than in suggesting alterations of a Latin author, and defending them by learning and ingenuity, which oftener produce admiration than conviction.

Renews his  
correspon-  
dence with  
Grævius.

The Doctor now resumed his correspondence with Grævius, to whom he communicated his design, along with three or four emendations of Horace, respecting which he asked for his friend's opinion. The literary veteran was delighted at this renewal of intercourse with a person whom he so greatly admired : he sent for his use a manuscript of Horace, and gave, what Bentley valued still more, his full approbation of the proposed corrections. The concluding part of their correspondence is interesting and affecting. We see the old scholar still zealous in the interests of literature amidst the calamities of life and the infirmities of old age. He had just buried his wife, with whom he had lived happily for forty-four years ; and he began to feel the distressing symptoms of dizziness or swimming



in the head : yet he occupied himself in preparing a corrected and enlarged edition of Gruter's Inscriptions, and in the very different task of writing the memoirs of King William. The interest which he took in the proceedings of the whole literary world continued to his latest hour. Two or three weeks after Bentley had received his last letter, he learned from Peter Burman, Grævius's friend and colleague at Utrecht, that he had been seized by apoplexy, while on his way from his own house to Burman's, where he was engaged to dine, and in a few hours was deprived of existence <sup>21</sup>.

CHAP.VII.  
1702.

Death of  
Grævius.

We must now advert to some parts of Bentley's administration of Trinity College, which occurred in the first five years of his mastership. The conduct of elections to fellowships and scholarships vitally concerning the prosperity of his society, he lost no time in making them the subject of his particular attention. Hitherto the examinations had taken place in the chapel *viva voce*, before the Master and eight Seniors, who are the electors: Bentley being of opinion that this oral test was not satisfactory in an enquiry so extensive and profound, ordered that the candidates should be examined by each of the electors at his own apartments, whereby an opportunity was given

Elections to  
fellowships  
and scholar-  
ships in Tri-  
nity College.

The  
Master's re-  
gulations.

<sup>21</sup> The letters of each were carefully preserved by his correspondent. Those of Bentley were obtained, along with an immense assortment of letters to Grævius, by Dr. Mead, at whose sale they were disposed of, and came into the possession of the late Mr. George Stevens: by him they were sent as a present to Dr. C. Burney; who having procured Grævius's letters from Mr. Cumberland, printed the correspondence in that sumptuous volume, called *Richardi Bentleyi Epistolæ*, of which it forms the most valuable half. There are, however, three of Grævius's letters in the collection belonging to Trinity College, which have not been printed, and which were probably overlooked when those papers were ransacked for his correspondence. Grævius's last letter is one of those omitted: it is that from which an extract was given by Bentley in his note on Horace, Carm. I. 23. 5. and its contents are on other accounts highly interesting.



CHAP.VII. for the performance of written exercises, and time  
1702. allowed to weigh and compare the respective merits  
 of the young men with suitable deliberation. This  
 method of separate examination, although liable to  
 some considerable objections, which were felt both in  
 Bentley's time and subsequently, continued to be the  
 practice of Trinity College for ninety years<sup>22</sup>. The  
 Master at the same time put a stop to an unwarrant-  
 able custom, which obliged the candidates to keep  
 open hospitality at a tavern during the four days of  
 examination: the expense of these entertainments  
 used to be defrayed by the persons elected; nor could  
 it have been inconsiderable, if, as he tells us, the  
 reckoning for a single evening amounted to six  
 pounds<sup>23</sup>.

Scholar-  
ships.

A practice had long existed of holding the elections  
 to scholarships but once in two years; and on those  
 occasions only the sophs and junior sophs were ad-  
 mitted as candidates. Though this could hardly be  
 said to be in express contradiction to the statutes, yet  
 it was certainly not agreeable to their spirit and  
 intent, inasmuch as it withheld longer than was  
 necessary the encouragement given by the foundation  
 to industry and good conduct. Accordingly the Mas-  
 ter conferred a benefit upon the rising generation by  
 ordaining that the elections should take place every  
 year, and that freshmen, as well as under-graduates  
 of higher standing, might become candidates<sup>24</sup>. In

<sup>22</sup> The present admirable system of examination was not adopted till the year 1789, when Dr. Thomas Postlethwaite became Master.

<sup>23</sup> *Bentley's Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 14. *Miller's Remarks*, p. 39. *Blomer's Full View*, p. 60. Similar entertainments used to be given at taking degrees.

<sup>24</sup> *Bentley's Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 13. Bentley, however, was not justified in attributing this abuse to a wish of saving the allowances due to the few scholarships which were annually kept vacant; a sum too paltry to have been any consideration with the Masters or Seniors. A



order to accelerate the succession to scholarships, he adopted a plan of erasing from the list, previously to each election, the names of those who, having taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts, did not design to return to the College; considering that to them a scholarship, the allowances of which are paid only to residents, must have ceased to have any value. This last measure, though proceeding from the best intention, was one of questionable propriety, and did in fact lead him to inflict an injury upon at least one meritorious young man, Luke Thompson, a Bachelor of Arts, and then a student in the Temple, whose name he cut out from the list of scholars in 1703, with the presumed consent of his tutor: this gentleman had designed to sit for a fellowship the following year; but, as scholars only can be elected fellows, he was excluded from all access to that object. Bentley, to whom both his person and his name were unknown, acted in this instance entirely from error; and although borne out by the strict letter of a statute, which allows to the scholars only forty-two days' absence in the year, he found sufficient cause to regret his precipitancy, when it was subsequently charged against him as an act of malversation.

In these, as well as many other measures of discipline, the Master proceeded upon his own authority and responsibility, without asking the approbation of the eight Seniors, his statutable counsellors. In thus deviating from the practice of his predecessors, he too plainly showed a disposition to engross to himself all power, and appropriate all credit in the College government. There is no reason to suppose that the Seniority, which he acknowledges to have been re-

The Master acts on his own authority.

more probable cause might have been found in the disposition likely to exist in old men, to relieve themselves from the fatigue of examining a large body of students, in the alternate years.



CHAP.VII. 1702. spectably composed, would have withheld its assent from any measures of a beneficial tendency; and their experience might have saved him from such errors as he incurred on the following occasion. One of the students having been detected by the Proctor at a house of ill-fame, for the second time, was brought before the Master; who, judging that the case called for severe punishment, immediately pronounced on his own authority the sentence of expulsion. Here was a positive violation of the statutes, which ordain that no member of the College shall be expelled except, after a full hearing of the case, by the voices of the Master and at least five of the eight senior Fellows. Bentley, in thus acting without the concurrence of the Seniority, followed a solitary precedent which he found for monarchical power. This was an order on a similar occasion, entered in the Conclusion Book, by his great predecessor Bishop Pearson. It is however curious to observe, that had he exercised upon this College register the same critical sagacity with which he perused ancient writers, Bentley would have been led to suspect that the authority which he made his model was in fact nothing more than a slip of the writer's pen<sup>25</sup>. At all events, the illegal act of a former Master, however

Expels a  
Student.

<sup>25</sup> Bentley's entry is as follows. "Dec. 24, 1701. Ordered by the Master, that Hanson the subsizar be expelled the College, for his foul and scandalous, and repeated offence. R. BENTLEY, Mag. Coll."

The example which he followed was an order, Jan. 23, 1664-65. "Ordered by the MASTER, that Young the scholar be expelled the College for his foule and scandalous offence. JO. PEARSON."

But the entry, which immediately follows, made at the same time, is this: "AGREED THEN ALSO, that Edward Botany be appointed the third cook. J. P."

As the words, '*agreed then also*,' show that the former order was made at a meeting of the Seniors, it appears in the highest degree probable, that Pearson intended to write, '*Ordered by the Master AND SENIORS*,' but omitted the two last words by accident.



great his fame, could not justify so palpable a violation of the statutes. With respect to his severity in this instance, it is but justice to Bentley, who was not ordinarily harsh towards juvenile delinquencies, to observe that the character of the young man was such as made him unfit to remain longer in the College. It appears that at the time of his repeated immoralities, he was a frequenter of a Presbyterian meeting-house, and was himself meditating the profession of a dissenting preacher.

CHAP.VII.  
1702.

In the first year of his mastership, Dr. Bentley turned his attention to the important object of supplying the newly erected library with books, and making it as beneficial as possible to the Society. For this purpose he obtained a College order, that the students should be admitted, upon liberal conditions, to the use of the library; and in consideration of this great privilege, every one was to pay at his admission a small sum for the purchase of books. He also set apart two classes for the use of the undergraduates and bachelors. The last measure seems to have been attended with more inconvenience than advantage, and I find no subsequent mention of such an arrangement: but the discontinuance of the payments upon admission, is a matter seriously to be regretted. Had the regulation been observed from that time to the present, so great is the number of students who have been admitted into Trinity College, that the library would probably at this day have ranked as high, in regard to useful books, as any collection in the world <sup>26</sup>.

Improves  
the Library.

August 19,  
1700.

The Master's efforts to improve the College library

Offends the  
Senior Fel-  
lows.

<sup>26</sup> The sums to be paid were thus fixed: for a nobleman or fellow commoner, twenty shillings; a pensioner, ten shillings; a sizar, five shillings. The alteration in the price of books would at this time render it necessary that the payments should be three or four times as great.



CHAP. VII. gave occasion to the first misunderstanding between  
1702. himself and his Seniority. Dr. John Hacket, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, a prelate noted both for his spirited defence of the dignitaries of the Church before the Long Parliament, and for his splendid munificence after the Restoration, was in the year 1667 a noble benefactor to Trinity College. To this Society, of which he had formerly been a Fellow, his attachment in old age returned with renewed ardour. The old part of the fabrick, called 'Gerard's' or 'Garret's Hostel,' being in a ruinous state, he gave 1200*l.* for the purpose of rebuilding it; with a provision that the rents of the chambers should be for ever appropriated to the improvement of the library. Not long afterwards the new library was erected at a cost of above 18,000*l.*; but when it was finished, considerable sums being still requisite for the book-cases and internal fitting up of this magnificent room, it was resolved that the charge should be repaid to the college stock by the rents of the 'Bishop's Hostel,' amounting to about 50*l.* a year. This arrangement was not inconsistent with the terms of the donation, which specified as its object not only the purchase of books, but the desks and fabrick of the library, and it was made with the knowledge and approbation of Sir Andrew Hacket, the Bishop's heir. Dr. Bentley, on discovering this practice, insisted that all these sums, which he contended had been 'interverted' from the library, should immediately be restored, and devoted to the purchase of books; with an assertion, that the College had been 'robbing the library,' and 'putting the money in their own pockets.' He carried his point, and succeeded in expending the whole sum, about 360*l.*, in books: but the Seniors, who had themselves been liberal subscribers, and had made great personal sacrifices to complete the structure, were

Bishop  
Hacket's  
Benefac-  
tion.

Dec. 22,  
1701.



deeply hurt at the imputation cast upon them ; and the uneasy feelings excited on this occasion, appear never afterwards to have subsided <sup>27</sup>. CHAP.VII.  
1702.

The next subject of College legislation was productive of great dissention in the Society, as will easily be believed, when it is understood how the interests of many of its members were affected by the decision. The Fellows of Trinity are not compelled by Queen Elizabeth's statutes to take any degree higher than that of Master of Arts : there are, however, some provisions intended as an irresistible inducement to the superior degrees of Bachelor and Doctor of Divinity ; the statutes assign increased stipends to those who have obtained such rank, and confer upon the Doctors in particular some material privileges, such as a preference to the highest College offices, the right of sole occupation of a set of chambers, (while other Fellows are to have pensioners living with them), and a permission, withheld from the rest, to occupy a house in the town. At the same time it is specially enacted, that admission into the number of the eight Seniors is not to be affected by those degrees, but determined by priority of standing alone ; whereby the oldest and most experienced are always associated in the government of the College. In the lapse of years the privileges just mentioned had ceased to be a sufficient temptation to encounter the trouble and expense of the higher degrees. The increase of the College buildings had accommodated almost every member, as well as the Doctors, with a set of rooms to himself ; and the surplus of revenue above the original rental, occasioned by the altered value of money, had produced a dividend which constituted the greater part

Privileges  
of Gradu-  
ates in Di-  
vinity.

<sup>27</sup> *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 14. *Miller's Remarks*, p. 40.



CHAP.VII. of a Fellow's income, and left the statutable stipends  
1702. objects of inferior consideration. There are however two chapters in the statutes, upon which graduates in divinity still claimed substantial privileges. In appointing the distribution of chambers, there is this direction : *Seniorem SECUNDUM SUUM GRADUM juniori, tam inter socios quam inter discipulos, semper præferendum statuimus* : and with respect to a vacant college-living, it is said, *volumus illius præsentationem socio SECUNDUM GRADUM SUUM maxime seniori, sive domi sive absens fuerit, omnino conferri*. At first sight, both these passages appear to give the preference to the senior graduates, in terms too precise to admit of a dispute ; particularly as the ordinary meaning of the word *gradus* in the statutes is an 'academical degree.' The opponents of this interpretation are, however, able to take fair ground, from the insertion of the words in the first extract, *tam inter socios quam inter discipulos* : about half the *discipuli*, or scholars, being under-graduates, the word *gradus*, as it applies to them, must mean *standing*, or *degree of admission* ; thence they contend, that it has the same meaning with respect to the Fellows : and as there is a manifest parallelism between the two passages, they argue that the word should, in the case of livings also, be interpreted as meaning no other seniority than that of admission. To overturn this objection, several strong arguments have been brought ; but the subject is of too local a nature to pursue further. I shall only remark that no person, unbiassed by interest or prejudice, can deny that there is some ambiguity in the terms of the enactment. It is the misfortune of this question hardly ever to have been discussed except in times of irritation, and by interested judges ; otherwise the real cause of the uncertainty might have been detected and acknowledged : I conceive it to



have been this—The Commissioners of Queen Eliza- CHAP.VII.  
 beth, in revising the statutes from a former draught, 1702.  
 made an alteration in these two particulars, without  
 noticing that, in order to preserve consistency, a  
 change of some other words became requisite. Their  
 inadvertency has left a bone of contention, which has  
 proved no inconsiderable evil to Trinity College. It  
 is indeed provided, that whatever ambiguities may be  
 found in the statutes shall be decided by the inter-  
 pretation of the Master and eight Senior Fellows.  
 But the latter are generally too much parties in this  
 cause to give an unbiassed judgment: and it has in  
 fact happened that the interpretation of one board has  
 been rescinded by their successors. In 1612 six of  
 the Seniors decided for preoption of livings and  
 chambers by standing; but in 1639 the majority  
 declared in favour of degrees. Nay, in the master-  
 ship of Dr. Pearson there are two orders made by the  
 same Seniority, within two years, which imply oppo-  
 site opinions upon this question. Both parties ap-  
 pealed to the practice of their predecessors; which  
 had, in truth, been various and unsettled, and sup-  
 plied authorities to each. The prevailing usage, how-  
 ever, had been this: the Fellows postponed their  
 degree of Bachelor of Divinity till some one among  
 their juniors was on the point of proceeding to that  
 rank; whereupon those who were not already B. D.  
 took the degree, in order to preserve their rights  
 unimpaired. It is obvious that were *all* to graduate  
 according to their standing, the priority of choice  
 would practically be the same, whichever interpreta-  
 tion be given to the words of the statutes. But there  
 was always an inducement to delay. The College  
 offices of junior bursar and steward, are confined to  
 Masters of Arts; and it was the practice for the Fel-  
 lows to hold them in rotation for three years. The



CHAP.VII. University offices of proctor and taxor are similarly  
1702. restricted ; and thus it sometimes happened that persons, in hopes of filling all those posts, remained Masters of Arts till an age at which the taking new degrees was irksome and inconvenient. At the time of which we are speaking, an unusually long interval had elapsed since any of the Fellows had graduated in theology : at length, in 1701, Colbatch and Hutchinson became Bachelors of Divinity ; and, in imitation of them, the next year four others applied for the same degree. The discussion of the disputed statutes was now revived, and much heat and disturbance ensued. The question being referred to Dr. Bentley, he declared his judgment decidedly in favour of the graduates ; and proposed to settle the point for ever by a formal and statutable interpretation. But here new difficulties arose : five of the eight Seniors happened to be only Masters of Arts ; and feeling that such a decision would have the effect of giving all their juniors a claim to rooms and livings before themselves, they stoutly resisted the Master's arguments and persuasions, though urged with all his ability at several successive meetings. At length, upon the candidates for the degree pledging themselves not to use their privileges to the prejudice of those five individuals, they consented to an interpretation, declaring the meaning of the two statutes to be, that ' all Bachelors of Divinity have the preoption both of chambers and livings before Masters of Arts ; and that one Bachelor of Divinity is to be preferred to another, according to the seniority of his degree in the University.' In exerting himself to establish this point, Bentley's motive was to raise the character of his Society, to engage the juniors in the studies requisite to appear with credit in their theological disputations, and to obtain for the elder members the consideration be-

Decision in  
favour of  
the Gradu-  
ates, June  
3, 1702.



longing to the rank and title of Doctor. His measure CHAP.VII.  
1702. had the effect of causing the Fellows to proceed to their degrees in divinity, with few exceptions, for nearly seventy years: after which the practice was again discontinued. But for the reasons already explained, the statute itself remains a subject for dissension, which no domestic resolution will ever be able to remove. It can only be taken away by a judicial decision, or by the easier and more eligible method of procuring a new statute in a Letter from the Crown <sup>28</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> An apology is due to the generality of readers for having dwelt so much upon a local topic, interesting only to Fellows of Trinity College: while to them the matter is so important, that they may perhaps wish my account had been still more detailed. For the tranquillity of the Society I hope the question may never more be in dispute, and that the knot may be cut by one of the two methods recommended in the text. Should it however again come into discussion, it may be of some use to caution the disputants not to rely upon assertions to be found in the only published arguments on this case—those in *Bentley's Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 15; and in *Miller's Remarks*, p. 45—49. Strange as it may seem, both these pamphlets contain several misstatements of the facts relating to this question. First, Bentley gives not the statute itself, but his own interpretation of it: and in a note, pretending to cite the actual Latin words, he omits that member of the sentence, upon which the objection was founded. Some of his statements about the practice of the College are inaccurate: for instance, in his 76th page, he says, that from the Restoration till his becoming Master, but three Fellows had taken any degree higher than M.A.; whereas the number who had taken higher degrees in that time was above twenty. He assigns the cessation of the custom of graduating to the times of the Commonwealth; whereas it had continued with considerable regularity for fifteen years after the Restoration. He is likewise mistaken in attributing the recommencement of the practice to his own encouragement in 1702. The four Fellows who then came forward (and who were not in fact B.D. till the next year) did so in imitation of two who had actually graduated in 1701: a fact of which he seems not to have been aware. As to Miller, he takes up the question so entirely as an advocate, resolved to keep out of sight all that could be said against him, that it may be doubted whether or not he was sincere in the opinion which he upheld. He confutes the mistakes of his antagonist; but gives in his turn, a still more uncandid statement. He suppresses the fact that *gradus* does in a great majority of places in the statutes, clearly mean an *academic degree*: he deliberately strives to confound different topics, by adducing as a case in point the statute for admission into the Seniority: the



CHAP.VII. Some other particulars of Bentley's government  
 1702. must now be noticed, to enable the reader to under-  
 stand the real nature of the charges which he will find  
 Latin De- brought against him. The statutes of Trinity College  
 clamations. direct that the Latin declamations of the students  
 shall be delivered on Saturday evenings 'after sup-  
 per:' they also enjoin that, for the encouragement of  
 diligence in the declaimers, all the society shall be  
 present at these exercises. The hour of supper was  
 six, and after that meal all who chose used to adjourn  
 to Chapel to hear the declamations. But it was found  
 in practice that the audience was far from comprising  
 the whole College; and the sizars, who sup after the  
 fellows, were by this arrangement excluded from an  
 opportunity of hearing these performances. To cor-  
 rect this evil the Master proposed that they should be  
 delivered immediately after evening service, whereby  
 a full attendance would always be secured; alleging  
 that such a deviation from the letter of the statute was  
 necessary to secure its essential object; or, to use his  
 own expression, that 'it must be broken in order to  
 be kept.' This alteration was accordingly voted,  
 though not without considerable opposition on the  
 part of some Seniors, who urged the indecency of  
 declamations after the manner of Quintilian being  
 addressed to an assembly habited in surplices, the  
 universal dress on a Saturday evening; an objection  
 which, notwithstanding the reconciling power of cus-  
 tom, cannot be denied to have considerable weight.  
 Perhaps, if it was judged indispensable that the statute  
 should 'be broken in order to be kept,' it might have

July 24,  
 1703.

practice he asserts to have been for eighty years before Bentley, against giving any preference to degrees; though living witnesses could have told him the contrary: and after having searched the Conclusion Book for this and other purposes, he quotes the two old orders which make against the claim of the graduates, but suppresses the two which are in their favour.



been a better mode of breaking it, to have fixed the exercises for some other evening in the week <sup>29</sup>. CHAP.VII.  
1703.

In some subsequent ordinances, Bentley was accused not only of affecting arbitrary power, but of endeavouring to gain popularity among the students while he mortified the fellows. In the year 1704 he issued a decree, that the head-lecturer and four sublecturers should be subjected to the statutable mulcts of eight-pence, and of four-pence, in case of neglecting their duty of lecturing and examining daily in the Hall. Sept. 30,  
1704. These lectures, being for the most part confined by the statutes to different works of Aristotle, had, it seems, been for some time generally omitted; and their place was found to be more usefully supplied by the lectures of the Tutors. It must be confessed that the revival of an obsolete and trivial fine was not the best method of enforcing attention to the duties of education.

At the same time the Master decreed that the penalty of three half-pence for absence from Chapel, which the statutes impose upon the fellows as well as other members of the college, should be exacted as far as concerned the lower half of the sixty fellows. This distinction, which appears rather arbitrary, was grounded upon an University statute, whereby persons above forty years of age are exempted from the Absence  
from chapel.

<sup>29</sup> It is fair to quote part of the College order made on this subject. After a preamble explaining the inconvenience which it was proposed to remedy, it proceeds thus:

“And it being morally certain, that if the declamations were delayed ’till after the scholars in waiting and poor scholars have supped, there would still be fewer auditors at the said declamations, especially in the time of winter;

“Resolved and agreed by the Master and Seniors, in pursuance of the primary intention of the said statute, which desires the whole College to be there present, that from henceforth the declamations be performed immediately after Evening Prayer, before their departure out of Chapel.

R. BENTLEY.”



CHAP.VII. severity of collegiate rules; and he assumed that  
1704. the last thirty might always be considered *nondum quadragenarii*. The measure itself was nugatory; since a more regular attendance could never be enforced by the infliction of so paltry a fine. The only good which this mass of small penalties could produce, was a more liberal remuneration to the two College deans for the execution of their invidious but important office.

Absence  
from grace.

Shortly afterwards there issued an edict from the Master, which was deemed a still greater stretch of his prerogative, and was accompanied with insinuations yet more offensive to the Fellows. A pecuniary mulct is fixed by the statutes for any person leaving his table in Hall before grace: hence had grown a custom which Bentley with justice styled 'unwarrantable.' The fellows, whom long association and friendship had linked together as one family, found much of their comforts arising from the society in the Hall, and sat longer over their repasts than the young men, who, as soon as they had despatched their meals, were in haste to go to their avocations, their parties, or amusements. This had induced a general custom of permitting the absence of all the students from grace, while to satisfy the letter of the law, they were fined the sum of two-pence weekly; a mulct, which was indiscriminately imposed upon all students, whether present or absent. This, being an undeniable abuse, called for a remedy; nor was there any reason why it should not have been removed by a regular order of the Master and Seniors. But Bentley, thinking it a fair opportunity of displaying the strength of his prerogative, and of humbling the fellows, sent forth a mandate, granting a general leave to every member of the College to quit the Hall before grace at his own discretion, without mulct or punish-

Oct. 11,  
1704.



ment: and stated as the ground of this decree, 'the unreasonable delays at meals at some of the fellows' tables.' This exercise of power he justified by an expression of the statutes, to which he gave a rather wide interpretation<sup>30</sup>. The deans, however, considering it an illegal proceeding, made some show of resistance, and attempted to fine a student who quitted the Hall: but they soon found that the decrees of the Master of Trinity were neither to be disobeyed nor questioned.

Conformably to the original observance of Friday, there was no supper allowed in the Hall on that day. Bentley, finding that this rule only led to the formation of parties at taverns on Friday evenings, with a view to remedy the evil ordered that meat suppers should thenceforward be provided in the Hall, and treated with infinite contempt some objections urged by the more scrupulous against this innovation.

From his first coming to the College, the Master determined to break certain customary privileges of the noblemen and fellow-commoners, which were in reality as pernicious to themselves as disgraceful to the society. With this view he ordained that their attendance at Chapel should be noted as well as that of the other students, and that they should deliver declamations in their turns. For the last resolution

Suppers on Friday.

Noblemen and fellow-commoners.

<sup>30</sup> The 17th chapter of the statutes ordains that grace shall be said before dinner and supper: *Quod quidem a Magistro vel Vice-Magistro, vel, illis absentibus, a Socio maxime seniore qui in Aula sit, semper fieri volumus.* Afterwards it says, *Quod si quispiam Sociorum aut Discipulorum aut Pensionariorum a mensa ante gratias actas discedat, nisi petita a Magistro, vel eo qui primarium locum tenet, facultate, prandii vel cœnæ pretio a Decano seniore, si adsit, vel juniore, cum alter abfuerit, mulctetur.* The words *nisi petita a Magistro*, &c. were made the ground of giving a general permission *unasked*. But by others it was considered as the intent of the statute, that leave should be asked of the person who was presiding in the Hall; which the Master of the College had long ceased to do, except upon festivals and extraordinary days.



CHAP.VII. 1704. not only Trinity College, but the nation, is indebted to him ; since it has happened, in a great number of instances, that young men of birth and family, who have afterwards become the most shining senators and statesmen, have first had their emulation excited and their talents developed by these collegiate exercises.

Causes of Bentley's unpopularity.

The test of the propriety of Dr. Bentley's ordinances, in the first years of his mastership, is, that they have been maintained, with a very slight exception, from that time to the present. The only valid objection against them appears to have been the assumption of monarchical authority by which they were enacted. There were, however, not wanting other causes which rendered the Master unpopular among his Fellows. He suffered from a comparison with his predecessor, Dr. Montague, who by associating intimately among them and exercising a liberal hospitality, as well as by his indulgent manners, had secured the love and affection of the College. Bentley, though fond of the society of a small circle, had no taste for the large scale of hospitality incumbent upon the Head of such a foundation, and thereby incurred the imputation of penuriousness. But the subject of loudest complaint at this time, was the great and unlooked-for expense of the reparations in the lodge. The Seniors, who had been led to expect that these works were to cost the College about 200*l*, when they saw them threatening to reach five times that amount, refused to sanction further expenditure. At length, the Master obtained with great difficulty an order for the bursar to defray the workmen's bills already incurred, amounting to between 7 and 800*l*; but not until the Seniors had been reminded, that there was a necessity for this being done, and that they had, by subscribing the original order for the work, made themselves per-

Expenses of repairs of the lodge.

Dec. 24, 1701.



sonally responsible for the payment<sup>31</sup>. At the same time, they voted 150*l.* more for finishing it, besides the 100*l.* to be given by the Master. But they soon found that the cost still to be incurred reached a considerable multiple of that sum. Much money was expended in fitting up a large room formerly appropriated to the performance of comedies. These exhibitions, which are prescribed by the statutes, and were regularly practised till the time of the civil wars, King James I. in his frequent visits to Cambridge had been fond of witnessing. The room appeared to have been originally part of the master's premises, since it could only be approached by passing through the house: as the performances had been long disused, and it was devoted to no other public object, Bentley considered himself justified in reuniting it to the lodge. But in the college the matter was not regarded in the same light; and this apartment had certainly not been in contemplation when the order was passed for fitting up the lodge; accordingly much dissatisfaction ensued. At length however the work was supposed to be complete, and all the accounts had been paid, when Bentley unexpectedly applied for leave to erect a new and handsome staircase. To this fresh application the Senior Fellows unanimously refused their assent, representing the great extent of the charges already incurred, as well as the goodness and sufficiency of the old one, whose width admitted four persons abreast. This it was which led to the first open rupture in the College: Bentley, irritated at his repulse, immediately ordered the old staircase

CHAP.VII.  
1704.

New stair-  
case.

<sup>31</sup> It was in reference to this matter that Bentley was reported to have boasted, 'that he had choused the old gentlemen.' The story is every way improbable and unworthy of credit: had there been any evidence for so disgraceful an expression, it would certainly have been brought forward: as it amounted to an acknowledgment of the whole charge made against him.



CHAP.VII.

1704.

Dispute between the master and the seniors.

to be pulled down, and the new one to be built upon the projected plan. Mr. Spencer, the bursar, whose office especially directed him to take care of the College property, went to the lodge, accompanied by other Seniors, and forbade the workmen to proceed. The Doctor, when informed of this interference of the bursar, treated it with much contempt, saying that 'he would send him into the country to feed his turkeys,' and in defiance of all remonstrance, he finished the present very handsome and appropriate staircase, which cannot be denied to reflect credit upon his taste. In this proceeding, however, he had made himself liable to defray the expense from his own pocket; and so he was informed by the Seniors, when he asked them, two or three times, to sanction the payment from the public stock. Hereupon he reminded them of certain powers vested in their Head, which, although disused, might at his pleasure be exerted for the annoyance of the fellows. It is ordered that no member whatever shall go out of the College, though for a short period, without leave first given by the Master or his deputy, and even then the time of his absence is limited to 62 days, except permission for a longer time has been obtained from the Master and Seniors; and sundry penalties, both vexatious and severe, are attached to the breach of this statute. Experience, however, having shown that the non-residence of a part of the fellows was beneficial to the College as well as to the country at large, these strict injunctions had long been neglected; and the form itself of soliciting leave of absence, an indulgence never likely to be refused, had been altogether omitted with the connivance and possibly at the wish of the governors. Dr. Bentley now hinted to the fellows not only his undoubted power to withhold his consent in future to their leaving College, but the penalties



which the greater part of the society had already incurred; at the same time styling this prerogative *his rusty sword*. The following scene is recorded as

having taken place in the presence of many witnesses. One evening in coming out of the chapel, the Master accosted the Seniors in the great quadrangle with much urbanity, and finding them in perfect good humour, touched upon the subject of the staircase; when, contrary to his expectations, they all decidedly refused to have any thing to do with it. Irritated at this disappointment, his colour and his voice altered, and he demanded, in menacing accents, whether ‘they had forgotten his rusty sword <sup>32</sup>.’

The method by which it is alleged that he finally carried his point was even more censurable than the violence of his previous behaviour. Finding his threats ineffectual, he determined to give an actual specimen of the weight of his prerogative. Of the fellows of Trinity, those only who are College preachers, are allowed to hold Church preferment. These College preacherships were originally twelve in number, but were increased by King James I. to sixteen. At this period there were four vacancies, and four of the fellows whose standing gave them a claim to succeed, having performed the requisite exercises, were candidates. One of these gentlemen, Mr. Michael Hutchinson, had recently been presented to a Stall in Lichfield Cathedral, which of course he could not hold along with his fellowship, unless appointed a College preacher. Bentley, availing himself of this circumstance, declared that he would not consent to any election until the expense of the staircase was defrayed, and plainly told Hutchinson and the others that their only chance of the appoint-

<sup>32</sup> *The True State of Trinity College*, 1710, p. 52.



CHAP.VII. ment would be by persuading the Seniority to allow  
1704. the charge on the public account. This stratagem succeeded: the Seniors, teased by importunities, willing to effect a pacification even by a great sacrifice, and seeing no other method of saving one of their brethren from the loss of his preferment, which was on the point of lapsing, did at length, after a resistance of two years, concede the point, and sanctioned the payment of 350*l.* for the staircase: whereupon the College preachers were appointed, and harmony was for a season restored to the society <sup>33</sup>.

Dec. 20,  
1704.

Sequel of  
Phalaris  
controversy.

Atterbury.

We must now quit the politics of Trinity College, to record the sequel of the controversy on Phalaris. It was no secret that Atterbury was the principal author of 'Boyle against Bentley,' the book which had procured such triumph and distinction to the person whom it was intended to annihilate. In the course of his dispute upon the rights of Convocation, Atterbury was taunted with the defeat which he and his party had sustained from the pen of Dr. Bentley, and with having left their adversary in possession of the field. Upon this provocation there appeared a small anonymous book, entitled 'A Short Review of the Controversy between Mr. Boyle and Dr. Bentley,' the author of which, I have no hesitation in believing, from the style as well as other evidence, to be Atterbury himself <sup>34</sup>. The professed objects of the piece

<sup>33</sup> The Seniors at the time of making this concession, stipulated that an inventory of the furniture to be purchased with the 270*l.* in the Master's hands (viz. his own contribution of 100*l.*, and Dr. Montague's donation of 170*l.*) should be entered in the junior bursar's books, as goods belonging to the lodge: an agreement which Bentley neglected to fulfil, and thereby incurred much gratuitous odium.

<sup>34</sup> The title of this book is almost long enough for a table of its contents. '*A Short Review of the Controversy between Mr. Boyle and Dr. Bentley: with suitable reflections upon it. And the Doctor's advantageous character of himself at full length. Recommended to the serious perusal of such as propose to be considered for their fairness, modesty, and good-temper in*



are, to apologize for Mr. Boyle, and to decry the presumption and ill-manners of his opponent: but from all questions of learning, the only objects in the controversy worth attention, it carefully abstains, and thereby conveys a tacit but perfect confession of Bentley's triumph. Though the style is caustic and polished, yet its general effect is feeble; being little more than a repetition of the criminating charges of Boyle's book, subdued and diluted by an unwilling moderation. Notwithstanding the popularity of Atterbury, this tract produced little or no sensation: in fact, it appears shortly after its birth to have sunk into oblivion. Among all the accounts of the Phalaris controversy, I do not find any mention of this 'Short Review;' nor could the author or his friends be solicitous to claim a work which the public showed no inclination to notice.

I observed in the last chapter, that when Bentley disputed the opinion of Dodwell upon the age of Phalaris and of Pythagoras, he appealed to the judgment of that master of chronological learning, Bishop Lloyd, who immediately published a tract confirming for the most part our critic's views upon the question. It was not till after five years, that Dodwell found leisure to publish an elaborate reply. About this work the most remarkable circumstance is, that its learned and candid author acknowledges the errors which he had committed respecting Phalaris, and

Dodwell's  
Chrono-  
logy.

*writing. London, 1701.* In a manuscript letter from Dr. Wake to Dr. Charlett, dated March 14, 1700-1701, the anticipation of this book is clearly alluded to: Wake, having mentioned Atterbury's late work written in reply to himself, '*The Rights, Powers, and Privileges of an English Convocation, stated and vindicated,*' adds, "Dr. Bentley is next to be brought upon the stage. The book, I am told, is ready, but the market must not be overstocked; and 'tis reasonable that the world should recover breath, and have a new appetite to laugh, before it comes abroad. Some men, I am told, wonder at my impudence that I have not yet hanged myself."



CHAP.VII. rather corrects than defends his former opinions. He  
1704. places Pythagoras later than either Bentley or Lloyd had done, and upon this point adduces a powerful mass of authority : at the same time he confesses the great difficulty of the subject ; the oldest historians having neglected to distinguish the accounts resting on certain authority from those which they derived only from tradition. This able tract, though not written in an elegant style, is a model of controversial candour and good-manners. Dodwell treats his two adversaries with the respect and consideration which their learning deserved ; but he discovers the feelings of the nonjuror, when in speaking of Lloyd, now Bishop of Worcester, his old patron and friend, he terms him *Episcopus olim Asaphensis* ; that he might not acknowledge the validity of his translation by King William. The book itself is one of great value ; being the most elaborate attempt ever made to approximate to truth respecting the history and biography of that remote age <sup>35</sup>.

Swift's  
pieces pub-  
lished.

About the same time Swift's two famous productions, ' The Tale of a Tub' and ' Battle of the Books,' were ushered into the world. They appeared

<sup>35</sup> The title of the work *Exercitationes duæ, Prima de Ætate Phalaridis ; Secunda, De Ætate Pythagoræ Philosophi. Ab HENRICO DODWELL, A.M. Dubliniensi. Londini, 1704.* The spirit in which it is written may be judged by the following extract from the discussion on the age of Pythagoras : ' Nos hic Natalem uno anno seriores quam in prædicta Dissertatione (scil. De Cyclis Veterum) posuimus, de quo infra plura. Antiquior placet amico summo Cl. Lloydio Episcopo olim Asaphensi, et eruditissimo Bentleio. Natum illi censent Olymp. xliii $\frac{3}{4}$ . ut annum ætatis xviii. Olymp. xlviii. inchoarit, quæ illum ætas excluserit a Pugilatu Puerorum. Pugilem enim Pythagoram eundem existimant cum Philosopho. Discrepamus ergo spatio integro novem Olympiadum, annorumque proinde xxxvi. De quo spatio ambigitur, antiquioremne justo Pythagoram fecerint celeberrimi Adversarii, an nos potius justo seriores. Nostras ergo dissentienti rationes, qua par est nominum tantorum observantia proponemus ; nec aliter quam qua salva veritate licebit, tuebimur atque vindicabimus. Sic enim Christiani hominis officiis, et bono Reipubl. literariæ publico, optime consulturos arbitramur.' *Dodwelli Exercitationes Duæ*, p. 96.



anonymously, after having been for several years handed about in manuscript: the reason for this long delay in the publication it is not easy to determine; it has indeed been remarked that a degree of mystery almost always attended the productions of Swift. Both pieces were immediately read with great interest and avidity; three editions were called for in 1704, and a fourth, with the author's corrections, appeared in the following year. But how great soever was the amusement which it afforded to the laughers, the 'Tale of a Tub' occasioned much scandal and disgust, from the irreverent levity of the allegory in which the history of the Christian Church is disguised. Though there was no doubt of the author's design to uphold the Church of England, yet many of its zealous and conscientious members were justly offended at the method to which he had recourse for this purpose; among them was Queen Anne, who in consequence of this work steadily resisted the promotion of its author to a dignity in the English Church. So resolute was she in her refusal, that a few years afterwards her minister, Harley, who admitted Swift to his confidential intimacy, while in the plenitude of influence, and all-powerful upon other matters, was unable to advance him to a place on the episcopal bench.

In the following year Wotton printed a third edition of his 'Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning;' in which appeared Bentley's Dissertation upon the spurious Epistles of Euripides, Themistocles, and Socrates, and the Fables of Æsop; that upon Phalaris was omitted, being superseded by the larger work. As an appendix, Wotton wrote an able defence of himself and Bentley against the attacks of Swift, without spleen or ill-humour, but not without severity. At the same time he exposed, fairly enough, the real

CHAP.VII.  
1704.

Wotton's  
defence.



CHAP. VII. allusions contained in the 'Tale of a Tub.' Dr.  
1704. Swift, in his edition of 1709, bethought himself of  
 this pleasant conceit: he extracted passages from  
 Wotton's appendix, and affixed them as explanatory  
 notes to the text; thereby making his adversary the  
 commentator on his 'Tale:' a character which Wotton  
 sustains very respectably; his notes have been at-  
 tached to every subsequent edition, and prove in sober  
 sadness very useful to the reader <sup>36</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> Bennet, the bookseller, the prime mover of the famous dispute upon  
 Phalaris, died in 1706: and it is a curious fact that he gave occasion by  
 his death to another controversy of some celebrity. His funeral Sermon  
 was preached at St. Paul's by his patron Atterbury, and contained a lavish  
 eulogium on his character, which is said not to have been well deserved.  
 In discoursing on his text, 1 Cor. xv. 19. "*If in this life only we have hope  
 in Christ, we are of all men most miserable:*" the Doctor maintained that  
 'were there no life after this, men would be more miserable than beasts;'  
 and 'the best men would be most miserable.' Immediately on the pub-  
 lication of this discourse, the celebrated Hoadly printed a letter to Atter-  
 bury, calling in question these positions: which the preacher defended in  
 a preface to the second edition of the Sermon: and was again attacked in  
 a rejoinder by Hoadly, who on this occasion first distinguished himself in  
 the field of controversy, and seems to have had the advantage over his  
 antagonist.



CHAPTER VIII.

*Queen Anne visits Cambridge—Sike, the oriental scholar—Elected Hebrew Professor—Dr. Brookbank—Cottonian library—Verses on the death of Prince George of Denmark—Bentley prints the text of Horace—Baron Spanheim—Kuster's Suidas—Jubilee at Frankfort on the Oder—Kuster quits Berlin, and returns to Utrecht—Undertakes an edition of Aristophanes—Bentley's Critical Epistles to Kuster—to Hemsterhuis—His children—He takes pupils as boarders in the lodge—Roger Cotes—Bentley builds an Observatory—Founds a school of natural philosophy—Whiston—Vigani, Professor of Chemistry—Bentley prepares a chemical laboratory—College bowling-green—Bentley's plan for a new interior of the Chapel—Bernard Smith the Organ builder—Subscription—The work superintended by Professor Cotes—Distress of the Fellows—The Master's measures of Retrenchment and Reformation—College festivals—College offices—Pandoxator's Dividend—First deviation from the rule of merit in elections to Fellowships—Expulsion of two Fellows—Wyvill—Breval—Bentley discommunes some Fellows—Attempts to take away the Combination Room—Is a candidate for the Bishoprick of Chichester—John Davies—Bentley's Emendations on Cicero's Tusculans—James Gronovius—Peter Needham's Edition of Hierocles—Assistance received from Bentley—Second Edition of Sir I. Newton's Principia.*

Not long after his lodge had been completely refitted and furnished, Dr. Bentley enjoyed the honour of receiving in it no less a guest than his Sovereign. Queen Anne, who was passing the month of April 1705 at the Royal residence at Newmarket, went over on the 16th, accompanied by her husband and her whole Court, to visit the University of Cambridge. Alighting at the Regent Walk, before the Schools, she was received by the Duke of Somerset the Chancellor, at the head of the University, and addressed in a speech by Dr. Ayloffe, the Public Orator. From thence her Majesty went in procession to the Regent House, where agreeably to ancient custom was held the congregation of the Senate, termed *Regia Comitia*,

CHAP.  
VIII.  
1705.

Queen Anne  
visits Cam-  
bridge.



CHAP.  
VIII.  
1705.

Confers  
knighthood  
on Sir Isaac  
Newton.  
Dines in the  
College  
Hall.

at which the University conferred degrees upon all persons nominated by the Royal command ; the presence of the Sovereign dispensing with statutable qualifications and exercises<sup>1</sup>. Afterwards the Queen held a court at Trinity Lodge, where she rendered this day memorable by conferring knighthood upon the most illustrious of her subjects, Sir Isaac Newton<sup>2</sup>. A sumptuous dinner was then given to the royal visitor and her suite in the Hall of Trinity College, which had been newly fitted up and decorated. Whoever is acquainted with the large sums which *Alma Mater* has since expended on public objects, will be surprised to learn that she was then so poor, as to be compelled to borrow 500*l.* for the purpose of this entertainment<sup>3</sup>. The royal party, after attending evening service at the magnificent chapel of King's College, took leave of the University, and returned the same night to Newmarket.

Sike, the  
oriental  
scholar.

Bentley, from his first coming to Trinity College, lived principally in a select knot of intimate friends, with whom his intercourse was constant and familiar. For two of these, Ludolph Kuster and Henry Sike, he procured on the day of the Queen's visit the degree of Doctor of Laws in the University ; an academical rank which circumstances rendered peculiarly desira-

<sup>1</sup> Among the personages of the Queen's suite who received the degree of LL.D. were the Lords Sunderland, Orford, Wharton, and Harvey. There were created at the same time thirteen Doctors of Divinity, among whom occur the well-known names of Robert Mosse, William Fleetwood, Samuel Bradford, and Andrew Snape ; and three Doctors of Physic, one of whom was her Majesty's physician, the celebrated Dr. Arbuthnot.

<sup>2</sup> The two persons who had the honour of receiving knighthood along with Sir Isaac Newton, were Sir John Ellys, Master of Caius College, the Vice Chancellor, and Sir James Montagu, the University Counsel, afterwards Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer. *Oldmixon's Hist. of the Stuarts*, vol. ii. p. 355.

<sup>3</sup> Grace Book, April 2, 1705. From some expressions in the controversial pamphlets in 1710, I infer that the expense of this academical banquet was not less than one thousand pounds.



ble to them both. Of Kuster's history we have already spoken: Sike was a native of Bremen, and, like the other, a scholar of fortune: having obtained great distinction for his knowledge of oriental literature at the University of Utrecht, he published a version of one of the Apocryphal Gospels from the Arabic, and engaged, jointly with Kuster, in the composition of the literary journal called *Bibliotheca Novorum Librorum*. His merits being made known at Cambridge by his friend and colleague, Bentley formed the idea of bringing him over, and raising him to the station of Hebrew Professor, a post in which a vacancy was shortly expected. This scheme was in agitation as early as 1702, and gave great satisfaction to the venerable Grævius, by whom, as well as the other scholars of Utrecht, Sike was highly esteemed for his learning and character<sup>4</sup>. There were however certain difficulties in the way of the project, which it required all Bentley's address to overcome. The statute of foundation for the Hebrew professorship requires that the candidates must present themselves in person to be examined by the electors, and that they must have the degree of Doctor or Bachelor of Divinity, or, at the least, of Master of Arts. It is indeed specified, that if a majority of the electors should deem an absent person most deserving, the election shall be postponed to give him an opportunity of appearing. The vacancy having taken place by the resignation of Mr. Talbot, the Master of Trinity, being one of the seven electors, availed himself of this clause, and

CHAP.  
VIII.  
1705.

Feb. 3,  
1703-4.

<sup>4</sup> Grævius says, in his last letter to Bentley, Dec. 1702: "Audio vos cogitare de provincia literas orientales docendi Sicio nostro mandanda: quod si feceritis, optime consuletis studiosis harum deliciarum. Non destituet vestram expectationem. Doctrinam ejus nosti: doctrinæ respondent mores ac vivendi ratio, quam vobis æque probabit ac eruditionem."



CHAP.  
VIII.  
1705.

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April 24,  
1705.  
Elected Hebrew Pro-  
fessor.

induced a majority to declare the election postponed till Sike should appear: in the meantime Mr. Bouquet, Fellow of Trinity College, was named to fill the office and receive the salary<sup>5</sup>. By this contrivance the time of election was made to depend upon Sike's convenience; and since a meeting for the purpose could not take place without Bentley's concurrence, it was in effect postponed until they were certain of success. Accordingly, Sike having become a member of the University at the Royal Commencement, and the opportunity being found favourable, he was chosen Regius Professor of Hebrew<sup>6</sup>. Bentley not only assigned him good chambers in Trinity, but recommended all oriental students to his instructions; and, to render his situation still more advantageous, admitted pupils under him as one of the public tutors of the College.

Dr. John  
Brookbank.

Among the few with whom Bentley lived in close intimacy was Dr. John Brookbank, a civilian, Fellow of Trinity Hall, and the Official of his archdeaconry. This gentleman is extolled as often as he is named, for the suavity of his manners and the friendliness of his disposition. His character and consideration in the University must have been great, as I find that in the year 1692 he was a candidate to represent it in Parliament; although unsuccessful, he had a respect-

<sup>5</sup> The resolution made on that day is still extant in the Registry Office, drawn up by Bentley's hand, and states, that the electors were unanimous in considering Sike *dignissimus*, though not unanimous in judging him capable of being elected. It is subscribed by the seven electors, at the head of whom is Sir William Dawes, afterwards Archbishop of York, who was then Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

<sup>6</sup> In the register of this election, Sike is specified to be 'Master of Arts in the University of Utrecht, and Doctor of Laws in our own.' It seems extraordinary that he did not receive at the Royal visit the degree of M.A. which would have been a qualification more consistent with the statutes than that of LL.D.



able poll, in which there appear many of the first names in the University; and, above all, he was honoured by the vote of Sir Isaac Newton<sup>7</sup>.

CHAP.  
VIII.  
1705.

At this period of his life Dr. Bentley used to pass several months of the year in London, attending his various duties of chaplain to the Queen, librarian, and member of the Convocation. Parliament having purchased the invaluable manuscript library collected by Sir Robert Cotton, along with the house on the banks of the Thames which bears his name, it was placed under the care of the Royal library-keeper, and apartments were fitted up for him in Cotton House, better and more commodious than those which he occupied at St. James's. We now find him mixing in the highest circles, and his society courted by the most eminent characters in the Church and in the State. The ascendancy of his talents was generally acknowledged, and public rumour marked him out as a probable aspirant to the episcopal dignity. Though on familiar terms with many of the great, our critic does not appear to have attached himself to any one in particular: however, an opinion was raised that Lord Halifax was his professed patron, from a copy of Latin verses, in the *Threnodia* of the University of Cambridge composed on the death of Prince George of Denmark. It has seldom happened that these official expressions of academical feeling have procured any literary honour to their authors; and Bentley's verses on this occasion, we must confess, do little credit either to his judgment or delicacy. They are divided into three addresses; the first to the widowed Queen, the second to the Tomb, and the third to Charles Montague, Baron Halifax! the

Cottonian  
library.

Apartment  
at Cotton  
House.

Verses on  
the death of  
Prince  
George of  
Denmark.  
1708.

<sup>7</sup> John Brookbank was originally a member of Trinity College, where he proceeded to the degree of B.A. in 1674-5, and of M.A. in 1678. Being afterwards Fellow of Trinity Hall, he became LL.D. in 1692.



CHAP.  
VIII.  
1706.

topics of the last being his promised edition of Horace, and the noble statesman's own vein of poetry. This led to a general expectation, that the forthcoming Horace was to have been dedicated to that nobleman; a choice natural enough, from his having been formerly a Fellow of Trinity College distinguished for the elegance of his scholarship, and now the professed Mæcenas of the age<sup>8</sup>.

Bentley  
prints the  
text of Ho-  
race.

In the meantime the text of Bentley's Horace was committed to the University press. By a letter to Professor Sike, who was then at Oxford examining oriental manuscripts, it appears that in August 1706 he was diligently employed in correcting the sheets, and hoped to have the publication ready in the ensuing spring<sup>9</sup>. But the method which he adopted,

<sup>8</sup> As some readers may be curious to see a specimen of this poetical *luctus*, I shall treat them with the last of Bentley's three effusions.

“ Carole, si tibi adhuc Collegi cura vetusti;

Quod tamen assidue nascitur, usque novum;

Si placuit nostro nitidus jam pumice Flaccus,

Quodque sibi vates dixerat, usque recens;

Gratia si veteris tibi pectore vivit amici:

Unam fer multis officiosus opem.

Sume, precor, citharam nimium nimiumque tacentem;

Verbaque cum plectro fortia junge gravi:

Effer, age, Heroem, stellantique insere Olympo:

Dircæusque iterum nubila tranet olor,

Nos etenim viles, corvi picæque, poëtæ

Vix pennas madida (turpe) levamus humo.”

A former copy of the Doctor's elegiacs, on the death of the Duke of Gloucester, received a burlesque translation from Lord Jefferies, son of the infamous Chancellor. The above lines were honoured with a similar translation by some other hand.

<sup>9</sup> In this letter there is something too curious not to be quoted.

“ Sir,

Trinity College, Aug. 16, 1706.

“ I received your kind letter, and am glad to hear you have met with such reception at Oxford, and particularly that you have employed your time so well in searching into the oriental manuscripts there. I hope in time the public will have a testimonial of your labours by something in print. The old Arabic Poems, and the Proverbs, will certainly be worth



though intended for expedition, was ill calculated to accelerate its appearance. The text being printed off before the notes were written, it became necessary that the daring emendations introduced into Horace's verses should be defended by arguments, which put into requisition all his learning and all his subtilty. Had the notes been printed at the same time with the text, it is more than probable that many of the boldest alterations would have been withheld. Bentley found also that little progress could be made except in his long vacations. Great were the expectations excited by this undertaking; but among continental scholars, by whom his peculiar strength was better understood than by himself, it appears to have been regretted that he was not occupied upon some Greek author; and particularly there was an earnest and universal wish that he would give the world his promised Hesychius.

Of all the distinguished personages with whom Bentley associated and corresponded, no one had a greater regard for him than the celebrated Ezechiel

Baron Ezechiel Spanheim.

your editing, and bring a great honour to you, as well as benefit to learning. I send you here inclosed a letter, which came hither from Dr. Kuster; I presumed to open it, to see if there was any thing relating to me that required a present answer. I do not wonder that some of the Oxford men do talk so wildly about my Horace; but their tongues are better than their pens; and I am assured none of them will write against my notes. They have had enough of me, and hereafter will let me alone. Perhaps some little bantering book may come out incognito in English; but that none dare write in Latin, and set his true name to it, I am morally certain. However, if any one should do so, he has my free leave. *Quisque suo periculo.*

"Ἄλλους ἐξενάριζ', ἀπὸ δ' Ἐκτορος ἴσχειο χεῖρας.

I have printed three new sheets in it this last fortnight, and I hope shall go on to finish by next spring. You seem to have promised my notes to Dr. Kuster upon Hesychius absolutely; whereas you know I did it conditionally, provided he would print it at Cambridge. Your friends here are all well; I wish you much happiness till I see you.

R. BENTLEY."



CHAP.  
VIII.  
1706.

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Spanheim, who was now become a Baron of the Empire, and passed the last eight or nine years of his life as ambassador of the King of Prussia at the British court. This extraordinary man at the verge of fourscore continued to unite diplomatic activity with intense application to study. Perhaps it would be hardly possible to find so remarkable an instance of the characters of the man of business, and the man of study, combined in the same individual. Being a counsellor upon whose political sagacity and address his sovereign principally relied, he was deeply occupied in those measures which exalted Prussia to the rank of one of the leading powers of Europe, and he was at the same time closely engaged in publishing his laborious and abstruse work on Ancient Coins. His letters to our critic, several of which are preserved, testify high personal esteem, as well as admiration for his genius and learning, which it will be remembered he had been one of the first to discover and proclaim. As a testimony of his regard he presented Bentley with his portrait, which is bequeathed by the latter to Trinity College, there to remain as a memorial of their friendship.

Kuster's  
Suidas.

Bentley's other learned friend Kuster, having now, by means of his patronage, completed the three noble volumes of his Suidas, their appearance raised the fame of the editor, while it excited public admiration at the spirit and liberality of the University of Cambridge in undertaking so magnificent a publication<sup>10</sup>. Shortly after he had established his reputation by this work, he proceeded to assume his functions at Berlin; and by the management of his friend Bentley, his introduction to the notice of his Royal master was particularly auspicious. The University of Frankfort

<sup>10</sup> This is particularly noticed in Le Clerc's *Bibliothèque Choisie*.



on the Oder having resolved to celebrate the centenary anniversary of its foundation with secular solemnities, invited various other Universities to assist by their deputies at this ceremony. The invitation sent to Cambridge was courteously accepted; and a deputation was nominated by the Senate, consisting of representatives of the different faculties. The King of Prussia presided at the solemnities; and Kuster, being attached to the delegation, was presented to him, attired in the scarlet robes of a Cambridge doctor, and received in the gracious manner which his merits and character demanded. There exists a curious letter from him to Bentley, in English, giving a detailed account of this academical jubilee: from which it appears that the deputation from the banks of the Cam was distinguished above those of all the other Universities: an address was delivered to the King by Dr. Andrew Snape, the divine; another to the Prince Royal, by Dr. Penrice, the civilian; and a third to the Rector Magnificus, by Dr. Plumtre, the physician of the representative body<sup>11</sup>.

CHAP.  
VIII.  
1706.

Jubilee at  
Frankfort  
on the Oder.

April 26,  
1706.

Immediately after this celebration, Kuster entered upon his office of Greek Professor in the academy at Berlin; but he soon found that the reputation which he had achieved drew upon him the jealousy of his colleagues, who, though his inferiors in other respects, possessed interest with the ruling powers; while his own former friends were either dead, or had left the capital. Kuster was a man of high and independent spirit, which could neither brook affronts and slights, nor descend to the methods necessary to ingratiate himself at court. Perhaps a hastiness of temper

Kuster dis-  
satisfied  
with his  
situation at  
Berlin.

<sup>11</sup> An account of the solemnities was officially transmitted by the University of Frankfort to that of Cambridge, where it is preserved in the Public Library.



CHAP.  
VIII.  
1706.

Goes back  
to Utrecht.

might have contributed to make him take a precipitate resolution. Having allowed himself scarcely one month's trial of his situation, he determined to quit Berlin, and to pass the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of the freedom and the learned society to be found in Holland or in England. Having asked and obtained the King's permission, he betook himself to Utrecht, where he was kindly received by his old acquaintance, and found himself deservedly appreciated. Presently he resigned his situation at Berlin; whereupon the booksellers became the only resource to which he could look for subsistence. The reputation of his Suidas made them anxious that he should undertake a new edition of Hesychius; a work which he promised to execute, principally in reliance upon Bentley's emendations; well knowing how much they surpassed in worth the lucubrations of all other scholars, and what value and credit they would confer upon his edition. The Master of Trinity, who felt a sincere regard for Kuster, offered him the whole collection, but upon condition that the book should be printed at the Cambridge press; choosing that the fruit of his early studies should be issued to the world under his own eye, and from the bosom of his own Alma Mater<sup>12</sup>. Some difficulty and delay being thereby interposed, Kuster had in the meantime engaged for an edition of Jamblichus's Life of Pythagoras. Before this work was off his hands, he yielded to the urgency of some booksellers, who imposed upon him the task of a new and complete edition of Aristophanes, for which there appeared to be a great demand: consequently Hesychius was again postponed.

Kuster having now chosen to throw himself and his

<sup>12</sup> See Bentley's letter to Professor Sike, quoted in the note, p. 188.



reputation into the hands of others, was compelled to put his great work to the press, with scarcely a minute's delay, and to adopt a plan for the edition which was in opposition to his own judgment, and to the earnest and repeated recommendation of his friend Bentley. Thus he inserted the whole of the Greek Scholia; not only the ancient and valuable collection first printed by Aldus, but the modern lucubrations of the French scholars Biset and Bourdin, which overload and incumber the pages of his folio, and detract from its real value as much as they increase its price. It was determined that nothing should be omitted which had appeared in the edition of Portus; accordingly, the Latin metrical versions occupy a column in each page contiguous to the Greek text. At the end of the volume is a valuable collection of all the commentaries upon Aristophanes then in existence; but their arrangement is highly inconvenient to the reader. The truth is that Kuster was composing his own notes, while the press was occupied in re-printing those of other commentators. In vain did he wish for another year or two to devote to this great and important task: his finances, relying solely upon the profits of his pen, compelled him to obey the arrangements and the urgency of the Leipsic publisher, Fritch, who had undertaken to give him 150*l.* for the edition. His correspondence with Bentley at this period is very interesting. It was my good fortune to discover the originals of Kuster's letters, along with copies of two of Bentley's, amid a large collection of papers found in Trinity Lodge upon the death of the late Master, and I printed them soon afterwards in the seventh number of the *Museum Criticum*. The confidential manner in which the German opens his circumstances and feelings is very striking: he consults Bentley, for whom he entertained unbounded

His edition  
of Aristo-  
phanes.

Correspond-  
ence of  
Kuster and  
Bentley.



CHAP.  
VIII.  
1707.

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1708.

Bentley's  
Critical  
Epistles on  
Aristo-  
phanes.

deference, upon rather heterogeneous topics ; for instance, the readings of the comic poet, his own scheme of purchasing a life annuity as soon as he could scrape together 600*l*, and a private negotiation with some English minister to whom the *Aristophanes* was to be dedicated. The last point was decided in favour of Lord Halifax ; and of all the 'soft dedications' with which he was regaled, none was ever more soothing to his gentle ears, or better earned the 50*l*. or 60*l*. which was thought a reasonable compliment to the dedicator of a folio<sup>13</sup>. Bentley did not spare his best exertions to serve his friend on this occasion. He gave him good counsel relative to the undertaking, of which, as we have seen, he was not suffered to avail himself ; and not only transmitted a collation of the *Lysistrata*, along with some unpublished Greek Scholia which he had copied from Vossius's manuscripts while that collection was in England, but determined to put together for the use of the edition his own emendations of the Comedian. Accordingly, in the summer of 1708, he addressed to him three 'Critical Epistles,' containing observations upon the first two plays, the *Plutus*, and the *Clouds*. He had intended to proceed with the other nine ; but found that even these contributions arrived too late ; for Kuster's own commentary, in which he had designed them to be incorporated, was already printed. The use which his friend made of his letters was to dissect them into the form of notes, omitting all the points on which he had himself anticipated them, as well as much of that playful and digressive style which gives them a peculiar interest with the reader. Fortunately however the two of which Bentley preserved copies, have now after more than a century been given to the

<sup>13</sup> Vid. Kusteri Epist. *Museum Criticum*, vol. ii. p. 412—415.



world. There are scarcely any of the writings of our great critic which exhibit a more lively specimen of his acuteness, and perception of the elegancies of the Greek language, than may be found in these epistles. The reader of them will hardly fail to remark, that an edition of Aristophanes was the work which would have best suited the genius of Bentley: and every scholar must regret that he did not devote to this task some of the time which was passed in college squabbles, or in defending new readings of the Latin poets. It is not too much to say that, had he given his mind to such a work, no person ever lived who was so well qualified for an editor of the great Comedian of Athens. These specimens, it should be observed, were drawn up hastily, and after he had been for some years abstracted from that line of reading. Their style is animated and engaging: they abound indeed as much as any of his writings, with boastful and confident expressions; but for this it is a good apology, that he never intended them to meet the public eye, having strictly enjoined his correspondent to embody the remarks in his own notes, and to give them in his own words<sup>14</sup>. This injunction Kuster could not follow, having already printed his own commentary; and in such haste that his notes on one comedy, the *Lysistrata*, were written in a day and a half, and two other plays appear without any annotation whatever. The notes picked out of Bentley's epistles are subjoined to those of Baron Spanheim, who in his old age, and in the midst of public business, found leisure

<sup>14</sup> "Denique hoc oro te atque obsecro (quod antea facere memini) ut si quæ ex nostris tibi usui fuerint, ea in notis exhibeas, non meis verbis, nomine ad finem posito, ut fit in notis variorum; sed tuis, narrationis σχήματι, sic emendat Bentleyus, &c.; et quoties castigationum rationes adjicis, non meis verbis, quæ hic αὐτοσχεδιάζω, utaris; sed memor Epicharmi, Εἶμα δῶς καὶ πορφύραν, λόγοισι ποικίλλων σοφοῖς." *Museum Criticum*, vol. ii. p. 456.



CHAP.  
VIII.  
1708.

to write a profound commentary on the three first plays. Having two such auxiliaries in the rear, Kuster sent forth his *Aristophanes* with more credit than it really deserved <sup>15</sup>.

Tiberius  
Hemster-  
huis.

About the same period Bentley was engaged in a literary correspondence with Tiberius Hemsterhuis, the founder of the most distinguished sect of continental scholars. This personage, who was destined to hold among the literati of the eighteenth century a place second only to Bentley himself, was at that time a youth, and remarked among the learned of Holland for his surprisingly precocious attainments. A new edition of the *Onomasticon* of Julius Pollux had been for some time in progress at Amsterdam, when it was interrupted by the editor, Lederlin, being called away to a professorship in his native city of Strasburg. He had completed only seven books, and to finish the remaining three young Hemsterhuis was engaged as a well qualified person. It was the venerable Grævius, the patriarch of literature, whose authority sanctioned this recommendation; and at his urgent persuasion the youthful scholar undertook a work requiring no common portion of learning and judgment, before he had attained his eighteenth year <sup>16</sup>! His performance bears many marks of juvenility, but exhibits at the same time an extent of erudition which is perfectly astonishing in a youth. Like Kuster, he complains of being hurried by the

<sup>15</sup> Notwithstanding the breathless haste with which this edition was got up, and which was so injurious to the author, to the editor, and to the reader, there was an unaccountable delay in the publication. Bentley's notes on the *Clouds*, the last matter in the volume except the Indexes, were sent to Kuster in August 1708; but the book was not forthcoming till the year 1710.

<sup>16</sup> The character of Grævius, and particularly his kindness to young men of merit, is beautifully described by Hemsterhuis, in the preface to Julius Pollux, p. 24.



impatience of the bookseller, who was eager to derive the fruits of the expence bestowed upon the undertaking. Shortly before the publication of Julius Pollux, Hemsterhuis ventured to write to Bentley, whom he considered as the highest living authority, for his opinion and assistance respecting certain passages<sup>17</sup>: he received an immediate reply, with the Doctor's opinion upon all the subjects of consultation. The young Dutchman sent letters of thanks for this favour by the hands of two persons who failed to deliver them: at length, in the spring of 1708, Bentley received from him a letter of acknowledgment, with a present of some select Dialogues of Lucian which he had just published. Nothing can exceed Hemsterhuis's expressions of gratitude for the condescension and favour of the great critic: he regrets that the hurry of the publisher had prevented the edition of Julius Pollux being enriched with his emendations; but promises to insert those, and any other remarks which Bentley would send him, in his *Curæ Secundæ*. The attention paid to this second application marks considerable good-nature in our Aristarchus. He transmitted to Hemsterhuis one of the richest literary despatches ever consigned to the post-office. First he relieves his young correspondent from all apprehension of having given offence by his silence, and then, after some merited compliments on the learning, industry, and genius displayed in his work, he plainly tells him that his principal defects arose from the want of adequate skill in the ancient metres, and adds his urgent advice that he should lose no time in acquiring this description of knowledge; which indeed appears to have been generally neglected by continental scholars. As example is

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Correspond-  
ence with  
Bentley.

Bentley's  
Critical  
Epistle on  
Julius  
Pollux.

<sup>17</sup> This letter was written on the 4th of July, 1705, when he had been two years and a half employed on the work.



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usually found to have more weight than precept, Bentley took up the tenth book of Julius Pollux, and examined all the Comic fragments which it contains; correcting the errors of the original, as well as those committed by Hemsterhuis himself, and restoring the true reading with incomparable neatness and ingenuity. This epistle not only displays his acute and happy perception of the language, but shows in a striking light the importance of that metrical skill on which he so justly prided himself. It proves besides great knowledge of the peculiarities of Attic phraseology and Attic customs; which I particularly notice, because some late writers have been disposed to deny him that qualification.

Its effect  
upon Hem-  
sterhuis.

The effect of this letter upon Hemsterhuis was remarkable, and is well described by his celebrated pupil, David Ruhnken, in the *Elogium* with which he has honoured his memory. The restoration of the comic fragments was the very part of his work upon which he had bestowed most pains, and thought he had acquitted himself most successfully. What then was his mortification at finding that in almost every one of these attempts he had clearly failed; and that Bentley, without any greater assistance than himself, had by mere dint of learning and sagacity, restored the verses of the poet with success amounting to demonstration. In the first moments of chagrin, he determined to abandon his Greek studies altogether, and kept his resolution for about two months. He then began to consider that it was unfair to compare his own juvenile performances with those of Bentley, an experienced critic, and the first man of the age in that line of scholarship; and wisely judged that it would be better to follow the advice of his correspondent in endeavouring to correct the deficiencies which he had pointed out. To the honour of Hem-



sterhuis it is recorded, that he was in the habit of relating this anecdote as well as his own feelings on the occasion, to young scholars whom he wished to encourage: to the last day of his life he never failed to speak of Bentley with veneration, nor did he ever hear an attempt made to depreciate his merits without testifying offence <sup>18</sup>.

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I find that about this period Bentley was in correspondence with several other continental scholars, among whom the name of Adrian Reland, the orientalist, is the most distinguished. The homage and deference offered to him by them all, show the vast estimation which his publications had at this time acquired among the learned of other countries. Of his own letters, besides those to Kuster and Hemsterhuis, he kept a copy of one to Godfrey Richter of Jena <sup>19</sup>. From a letter of his to De Veil, a French scholar resident in London, the date of which I am unable to determine, it appears that his intense study by candle-light had produced a weakness of his eyes: which, however, he declares was relieved by an application of the insects called *multipedæ* <sup>20</sup>. This is the

Bentley's  
letters to  
other con-  
tinental  
scholars.

Weakness  
of his eyes.

<sup>18</sup> *Ruhnken. Elogium Hemsterhusii*, p. 23—27. Hemsterhuis kept the two Epistles of Bentley till his death, which happened in 1766. They were then found by his son and given by him to Ruhnken, who printed them at the end of the second edition of his *Elogium* in 1789. Bentley preserved a fair copy of his second letter, which, as well as the originals of Hemsterhuis's, is now lying before me.

<sup>19</sup> This Richter published *Specimen Observationum Criticarum* in 1713, and an edition of Phædrus for schools in 1718. He wrote to Bentley, Aug. 1, 1708, with an offer to collate for him a MS. of Manilius, which he had found at Leipsic. Bentley's reply has lately been printed in Germany from the original.

<sup>20</sup> "Sed qua ratione oculis meis malefactum rogas. Non usque adeo canis annisque obsiti sumus. Sed quia noctu ad lucernam et quidem luce satis maligna, etiam in lecto supinus legere jam olim consueveram. Hinc illis prima mali labes. Verum haud longa mora contemptissimi animalculi beneficio, quam credo multipedam vocant, simul illi acumen suum, et nos libros (imprimis autem tuos) resumpsimus." ["Quod



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only time in Bentley's life that I observe any complaint of his eyes failing him ; although he continued the constant exercise of them to extreme old age, in the most trying occupation of reading small Greek type and manuscripts difficult to be decyphered.

Bentley's  
children.

The offspring of Dr. Bentley's marriage were two daughters, Elizabeth and Joanna, and two sons, William and Richard <sup>21</sup>. William died shortly after his birth : of the other three, mention will be made in different parts of these memoirs. The increase of his family was probably the cause which induced the Master to listen to the solicitations of some noble persons, and take three or four young men, students of the College, as pupils and boarders of his own. Their names were Edward Viscount Hinchinbrooke, Lord Kingston and his brother, and Sir Charles Kemys. These pupils remained inmates of the lodge only one year (1707). The Master perhaps found that his attention to them absorbed too large a share of the leisure which this busy period of his life afforded. I apprehend that they stopped the progress of the Horace ; and it is certain that they were the means of exciting a considerable clamour in the society. That the Head of the College should take private pupils did not seem altogether consistent with his dignity ; nor could it be agreeable to the Fellows, who found themselves curtailed of their legitimate occupation. But it gave rise to a complaint of a still

He takes  
pupils as  
boarders in  
the lodge.

“ Quod liceat Velî doctas mihi volvere chartas,  
Ponitur hæc vobis gratia, Multipedæ :  
At vobis maneat crebris, precor, imbribus uda,  
Subque cavo quercus cortice tuta domus.”

<sup>21</sup> All, except Elizabeth the eldest, were born in Trinity lodge. It appears from the register of All Saints' parish, that Joanna was baptised Sept. 1, 1703 ; William, Jan. 16, 1706-7, and buried three days afterwards ; Richard, June 3, 1708.



more invidious nature. The spirit and liberality of the Fellows of Trinity had always supplied their Master's lodge with various articles of housekeeping, as bread, beer, oil, fuel, &c. out of the common purse of the College, and that too without limitation; reliance being placed upon the delicacy and good feeling of their Head, that this indulgence would never be abused. But when they found the expense of these articles increased by the consumption of the pupils, for whose board no payment was made to the College, they began to grumble and to tax the Master with greediness and meanness. As each of the young men paid him the large sum of 200*l.* for board and lodging only, they should certainly have been regarded in a different light from the rest of his family. Bentley, when he heard of the dissatisfaction, treated it with contempt, observing that 'a few College loaves' were not to be put in competition with the honour brought to the society by these young patri- cians; he thought indeed that he had amply repaid the cost by putting into their chambers three sash windows at his own expense. But neither these arguments, nor the mention of some precedents in the time of former Masters, (which, to say the truth, were not in point) could allay the discontent and disgust excited by the measure<sup>22</sup>.

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Complaints  
of this mea-  
sure.

During the period of which we are speaking, the exertions of Dr. Bentley to raise the character and improve the fabric of his college were great and successful. In the course of a single year (1706) he undertook three works of magnitude and importance; the erection of an observatory, the foundation of a chemical laboratory and chemical lecture, and the refitting of the chapel upon a magnificent plan. The

<sup>22</sup> There is much said on this subject in *Bentley's Present State of Trinity College*, p. 19. *Blomer's Full View*, p. 161. *Miller's Remarks*, p. 186.



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Professor-  
ship of As-  
tronomy.

Roger Cotes.

Jan. 1705-6.  
Bentley  
builds an  
Observa-  
tory.

Feb. 5,  
1705-6.

origin of the first work was this : Dr. Thomas Plume, Archdeacon of Rochester, had just founded and endowed a professorship of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy, making the Heads of Trinity, Christ's, and Caius Colleges, along with the Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, electors to the office. Among the young men chosen Fellows of Trinity in the year 1705 was Roger Cotes, a native of Leicestershire, who exhibited such an extraordinary proficiency in natural philosophy and mathematics, with so great an original genius, as attracted the attention of the Master, and caused his determination to bring him forward into a field worthy of his merits. Having made him known to Sir Isaac Newton, as well as Mr. Whiston the successor to the chair of that philosopher, and having obtained their testimony in his favour, Bentley proposed him as the first Astronomical Professor, and procured his unanimous election, while yet a Bachelor of Arts. No sooner had he accomplished this point, than he undertook to build a noble Observatory, that the study of astronomy, promoted by such a professor, and aided by such advantages, might become naturalized and permanent in Trinity College. For this purpose he instituted a subscription among the members of the College and the lovers of science throughout the University, by means of which he succeeded in erecting over the beautiful entrance of the College, called the King's Gate, an Observatory, stored with the best astronomical instruments which science could at that period produce. The expence, as commonly happens in such undertakings, greatly exceeded the sum contemplated; nor was the Master able to complete the purchase of the instruments, without appropriating to that purpose money which properly belonged to the library. He obtained a College order, assigning for ever the



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chambers over the gate to the Astronomical Professor and his assistant, who was to be a scholar of the College. In this station Cotes delivered his incomparable lectures on the sublimest subjects of natural philosophy for about ten years, when the world was prematurely deprived of that extraordinary genius. In his observations he was assisted by his young relation, Robert Smith, the worthy successor to his professorship. By such measures Bentley had the satisfaction of founding in Trinity College a school of natural philosophy of singular eminence, which has continued to produce some of the first scientific characters of our country in an unbroken succession from that day to the present. Thenceforth Newtonian learning became one great pride of the place in which the mighty genius of its founder had been nurtured and matured; and the same College which gave birth to his discoveries has been made a principal means of introducing the knowledge of them to the community. The great and solid glory of originating and fostering this school is due to Dr. Bentley; and it is just to observe that at no period did his enemies, in the height of their animosity, venture to deny or detract from his credit in this particular.

Founds a  
school of  
NaturalPhi-  
losophy.

It was at this time his favourite object to make Trinity College the focus of all the science in the University. With that view he procured for Professor Whiston chambers in the College adjoining the King's Gate, from which he and his pupils enjoyed the full advantage and convenience of the observatory. Whiston mentions in his Memoirs that he gave a course of lectures on hydrostatics and pneumatics jointly with Cotes; and, with a degree of modesty not usual to him, acknowledges the great superiority of his colleague's share in the performance<sup>23</sup>.

Professor  
Whiston.

<sup>23</sup> *Whiston's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 118.



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1708.

Vigani, Pro-  
fessor of  
Chemistry.

Bentley  
prepares a  
chemical la-  
boratory.

College  
bowling-  
green.

John Francis Vigani, a native of Verona, having resided in Cambridge and taught chemistry with reputation for about twenty years, received in the year 1702 a strong mark of the approbation of the University, by being invested with the title of Professor of Chemistry. To serve the purposes of science, and promote the celebrity of his College, Dr. Bentley resolved to transplant him and his lectures into Trinity. Accordingly he repaired and fitted up an old lumber house as an elegant chemical laboratory; and here Vigani regularly delivered his courses of lectures for some years. But, whatever might have been the reason, this scheme of founding a school of chemistry was not permanently successful. Some time elapsed after the death of Vigani before the University appointed a successor to the professorship. Bentley's conduct in this business, like some other of his laudable undertakings, did not escape an uncharitable construction. The College bowling-green happened to adjoin that part of the lodge in which was the Master's study; and parties of the Fellows, amusing themselves with the game of bowls, proved a frequent disturbance to the lucubrations of our Aristarchus<sup>24</sup>. Accordingly he aimed at delivering himself from this annoyance, and designed at the same time to enlarge the garden of the lodge, which is very confined, and lies contiguous to the bowling-green, by the addition of that ground. But no sooner had he propounded this scheme to the Fellows, than it met with their unanimous opposition, as an unwarrantable encroachment upon their comforts; and it was in vain that he

<sup>24</sup> The following memorandum is found in a blank page of Bentley's Ephemeris for 1701: "July 26, 1701, Saturday. Mr. Hutchinson, Mr. Porter, Mr. Green, and Mr. Laughton played at bowls in the College bowling-green all Chapel time, in the evening service: seen out of my window by me (who was then lame and could not be at Chapel) and Will. Saist."



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descended to private solicitations to effect his purpose. But as it was observed that he did not easily abandon his projects, it was suspected that the fitting up the 'lumberhole' had some bearing upon this design; since, if ever the bowling-green should become part of his garden, it seemed a natural consequence that the laboratory would be transformed into his greenhouse. So strongly did this suspicion prevail, that when the Master applied to the Seniority to defray the expense bestowed on that building, (which was not till after the work had been executed) they consented only upon the express and recorded condition, that it should never be converted to any other purpose than that of a laboratory for the use of chemical, physical, and philosophical experiments<sup>25</sup>.

Feb. 11,  
1706-7.

The idea of giving a new interior to the chapel, the greatest of Dr. Bentley's improvements in Trinity College, appears to have originated in the following manner. Among the members of his club in London was the celebrated organ-builder, Mr. Bernard Smith, who is universally known by the title given him by his contemporaries, of 'Father Smith'<sup>26</sup>. When he first became Master, this gentleman promised to make him a noble organ for his College chapel. The magnificent instrument being now in a state of forwardness, Bentley considered it almost necessary that the chancel should be fitted up with becoming elegance for its reception. It happened at this time that the fabric itself was dilapidated, the roof being decayed and dangerous, and one of the walls in imminent

Trinity  
Chapel.

Organ built  
by Bernard  
Smith.

<sup>25</sup> See *Miller's Remarks*, p. 68. *Blomer's Full View*, p. 119.

<sup>26</sup> See an account of 'Father Smith,' in *Noble's Biographical History*, vol. ii. p. 362. He did not live to complete the organ of Trinity: it was finished, 'by tuning and voicing,' by his son-in-law, Christopher Schrider, according to a resolution of the Master and Seniors, May 3, 1708.



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Bentley's  
plan for a  
new interior  
of the cha-  
pel.

Subscrip-  
tions of the  
Fellows.

hazard of falling. To repair the latter damage, Mr. Corker, a Senior Fellow, had, three years before, made a donation of 500*l.*; and several other benefactions, to the amount of 600*l.*, were appropriated to the same object. Fortified by these circumstances, the Master resolved to effect a complete reparation and new modelling of the whole building, with every suitable improvement and ornament; and thus to render it one of the handsomest chapels in Europe. But the College revenues being unequal to such an undertaking, he proposed to aid it by private subscription, and set the example himself by a liberal donation of 200*l.* Having thus taken the lead, he recommended to the Fellows that every one should subscribe the amount of his whole year's dividend, which was just payable. This must be acknowledged to have been a most unreasonable requisition; but such was the spirit pervading the society, and the determination not to be left behind in promoting a work which all had at heart, that almost every man complied. The amount of the dividend of a Senior was 50*l.*, of a Junior, 25*l.*; and these sums, though not large, constituted the principal income of the majority. To some who had small livings, pupils, or other resources, the sacrifice was comparatively light; but in most cases it proved highly distressing; particularly as in the years 1703 and 1704, owing to the great expenses of the College, only half a dividend had been received. Thus in some instances it happened that a person subscribed to the chapel more than he was worth in the world. In this measure Bentley emulated the example of his great predecessor, Dr. Barrow, who had, by an appeal to the members of his College, secured funds for the erection of a library. But although that magnificent work



cost more than 18,000*l*, so judicious were the arrangements that the burden was less felt than that of the present undertaking<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> The list of the subscribers for repairing and beautifying Trinity Chapel has, I believe, never been printed. It is true that acknowledgments come too late when more than 120 years have passed: however, as I know no instance in which donations have been so liberal in reference to the means of the contributors, it seems but an act of justice to give the Subscription of 1707 from the original copy.

|                       | £   | s. |                     | £  | s. |
|-----------------------|-----|----|---------------------|----|----|
| Richard Bentley, D.D. | 200 | 0  | John Barnwell       | 25 | 0  |
| W. Stubbe, D.D.       | 100 | 0  | Marshal Greswold    | 70 | 0  |
| William Mayer         | 50  | 0  | Thomas Hill         | 25 | 0  |
| George Modd           | 40  | 0  | Thomas Rud          | 5  | 0  |
| Edward Bathurst       | 40  | 0  | J. Baker            | 25 | 0  |
| M. Hutchinson, D.D.   | 30  | 0  | George Jeffreys     | 25 | 0  |
| John Colbatch, D.D.   | 30  | 0  | Gilbert Malkin      | 25 | 0  |
| Stephen Cressar, B.D. | 30  | 0  | Ed. Rud             | 25 | 0  |
| Henry Firebrace, D.D. | 50  | 0  | Samuel White        | 25 | 0  |
| Nath. Hanbury, B.D.   | 20  | 0  | Phillips Gretton    | 26 | 5  |
| Wm. Ayloffe, LL.D.    | 30  | 0  | Roger Cotes         | 25 | 0  |
| John Cooper, B.D.     | 20  | 0  | John Wyvill         | 25 | 0  |
| Edmund Miller         | 60  | 0  | William Chamberlayn | 30 | 0  |
| James Brabourn, B.D.  | 20  | 0  | John Felton         | 25 | 0  |
| Thomas Blomer         | 25  | 0  | Samuel Knight       | 25 | 0  |
| Henry Sike, LL.D.     | 30  | 0  | Henry Eden          | 30 | 0  |
| Henry Colman          | 50  | 0  | William Wade        | 25 | 0  |
| John Hacket           | 50  | 0  | Griff. Williams     | 20 | 0  |
| John Whitfield        | 20  | 0  | Phil. Bouquet, B.D. | 18 | 0  |
| James Bankes          | 20  | 0  | Edmund Stubbe       | 30 | 0  |
| William Drury         | 20  | 0  | Henry Hawes         | 10 | 0  |
| Montague Lloyd        | 32  | 0  | James Malled        | 20 | 0  |
| John Williams         | 25  | 0  | John Towersey       | 25 | 0  |
| John Paris            | 25  | 0  | Matthew Barwell     | 20 | 0  |
| John Craister         | 25  | 0  | John Heylin         | 5  | 0  |
| William Andrews       | 20  | 0  | Mordecai Cary       | 5  | 0  |
| John Laughton         | 50  | 0  | Edward Smith        | 21 | 0  |
| Montagu Bacon         | 30  | 0  | Laurence Eusden     | 10 | 0  |
| Bradgate Ferrand      | 5   | 0  | Paul Jenkinson      | 10 | 0  |
| Richard Stokes        | 20  | 0  | Robert Uvedale      | 25 | 0  |
| Hon. Wm. Kingston     | 100 | 0  | James Uvedale       | 25 | 0  |
| Samuel D'Oyly         | 25  | 0  | Ralph Welstead      | 20 | 0  |
| Thomas Pilgrim        | 25  | 0  | Ward Ashenhurst     | 25 | 0  |
| Nicholas Clagett      | 25  | 0  | Laurence Brodrick   | 20 | 0  |
| John Reddington       | 25  | 0  | Robert Lumley       | 20 | 0  |
| Conyers Middleton     | 25  | 0  | Abraham Franke      | 30 | 0  |
|                       |     |    | George              |    |    |



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The Master  
lends 1000l.

In order to facilitate the execution of the work, 1000l. was borrowed at five per cent, a low rate of interest at the time ; which sum the Master lent to the College from Mrs. Bentley's fortune. It is an instance of the violence of party prejudice that this act was afterwards objected against him as usurious, and made matter of judicial charge before the Visitor.

The work  
superin-  
tended by  
Prof. Cotes.

The whole arrangement and superintendence of the work, as well as the disbursement of the money, was committed to Professor Cotes. It must add to the interest with which this chapel is viewed, to learn that it was beautified under his auspices and direction : at the same time many perhaps will regret that so much of the brief period that this extraordinary genius was spared to the world, should have been devoted to such employments as collecting subscriptions, and overlooking the operations of masons and carvers.

Distress of  
the Fellows.

The work, though beautifully executed, and worthy of the College, was productive of extreme uneasiness and agitation. The expense exceeded 6000l; the private subscriptions of the Fellows, although they

|                                    | £  | s. |                                    | £     | s. |
|------------------------------------|----|----|------------------------------------|-------|----|
| George Tollet . . . . .            | 25 | 0  | D. Hopkins, D.D. <i>Rector</i>     |       |    |
| James Jurin . . . . .              | 25 | 0  | <i>of Fakenham</i> . . . . .       | 20    | 0  |
| Vyner Snell . . . . .              | 30 | 0  | Hen. Campion, Esq. <i>of Kent</i>  | 50    | 0  |
| Robert Parran . . . . .            | 25 | 0  | John Yardley . . . . .             | 10    | 0  |
| Alexander Burrell . . . . .        | 30 | 0  | John Valavine . . . . .            | 10    | 0  |
| William Smyth . . . . .            | 25 | 0  | Dr. Bowes . . . . .                | 10    | 10 |
| Anthony Corbiere . . . . .         | 30 | 0  | Mr. Ral. W. Cradock . . . . .      | 10    | 10 |
| Christopher Hussey . . . . .       | 25 | 0  | Mr. Trevor . . . . .               | 50    | 0  |
| Ri. Walker . . . . .               | 25 | 0  | Mr. William Sotheron . . . . .     | 10    | 10 |
| Henry James, S. Th. Prof.          |    |    | Mr. T. Micklethwaite . . . . .     | 5     | 5  |
| Reg. . . . .                       | 20 | 0  | P. Wagener, <i>Rector of Stis-</i> |       |    |
| William Herring, <i>of Cam-</i>    |    |    | <i>tead, Essex</i> . . . . .       | 5     | 5  |
| <i>bridge, draper</i> . . . . .    | 10 | 0  |                                    |       |    |
| Sir John Ellys, <i>M. of Caius</i> |    |    | Total . . . . .                    | £2674 | 5  |
| <i>Coll.</i> . . . .               | 10 | 0  |                                    |       |    |

In the heading of the above subscription for repairing and beautifying the College Chapel, it is stated that the expense of it 'may amount to about 3000l.'



absorbed most of their year's revenue, amounted to little more than a third of that sum : and, notwithstanding the assistance from other members, a large deficiency remained for the College stock to defray. Hence, in subsequent years, they found their expected income anticipated by the cost of the chapel, and several of them became involved, from no fault of their own, in debts and embarrassments. An outcry was immediately raised against the Master as the author of this distress ; and their ill-will was augmented by reports of his having spoken of their circumstances in terms of unfeeling levity. On one occasion, when the subject was mentioned, he is said to have replied, that " he expected their complaints, but that it would be all one twenty years hence <sup>28</sup>." And it is recorded, as a proof of his contemptuous treatment of those who had so largely and painfully contributed to the work, that when one of the Seniors enquired what he proposed doing to a particular part under reparation, he was told that ' he would know when it was done.' A settled ill-humour was now engendered in the Society, which discovered faults and bad intentions in every step and every expression of their Master.

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1707.

The extraordinary charge upon the College stock led Dr. Bentley to turn his attention to methods of improving its revenues, and economizing its ordinary expenditure ; and these financial subjects appear to have occupied much of his time and thoughts in the years 1706 and 1707. A large portion of the College rents, being, by Act of Parliament, paid in corn and malt, or in sums equivalent to the value of those arti-

Bentley's  
financial  
measures.

<sup>28</sup> Blomer, in his '*Full View*,' p. 125, declares that Dr. Bentley made this speech, which he terms ' barbarous,' in his hearing. But the words have not necessarily the application which he affixes to them : Bentley might have been speaking of *unreasonable* complaints.



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1707.

Retrench-  
ments.

cles in the Cambridge market on stated days, much collusion had existed from tenants influencing their prices in order to defraud the College : such practices were now met by strict and efficient regulations of the Master, which secured that important portion of the revenue. But his measures for domestic retrenchment gave so much offence, that it may be doubted whether they did not occasion greater evils than they remedied. The character of a fiscal reformer is generally invidious, and in order to produce real good, requires to be moderated by judgment and discretion. A great establishment, like Trinity College, is unavoidably exposed to the waste or imposition of servants and dependants. At that time the state of things called aloud for reformation : how the Master corrected one department of the system shall be related in his own words.

Pandoxator.

“ The pandoxatorship<sup>29</sup> had been so managed, that there were four bakers in one office, and four brewers in the other ; each independent of any other, and having a salary to himself : whereby the work was done negligently, and perpetual complaints made without means of redress. There was a clerk too, or supervisor of both offices, who having annually laid out many hundred pounds of College money for wheat and malt, had not bought one bushel in the open market for above twenty years before I came thither. The pandoxator too had carved well for himself, and besides other emoluments, had (as it were on purpose to puzzle the accounts) the 32d part of the yearly gain : and to enhance his own perquisite, had for many years placed that on the account of gain, which was manifestly on the side of charge and loss. To remedy all these evils at once, *without any consent at all of the governing part*, (for that was not to be hoped for, and the statutes in that case required it not), in 1707 I displaced this clerk, and four bakers, and four brewers at once, made a contract with one baker and one brewer to do the whole work for about half the charge, settled a certain salary of 20*l*.

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<sup>29</sup> “ Trinity College for above a hundred years has had a bake-house and brew-house of its own ; and the Senior Fellow, who looks after those offices, is called *pandoxator*.” *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 22.



*per ann.* upon the pandoxator (as a premium to the Seniority, though the very office might have been drop'd and spar'd), caused all the corn ever since to be bought in the open market, gained thereby some hundred pounds a year to the College, which since that time has had the best bread and beer in the whole University." *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 23.

In this reform there might have been nothing wrong, except the autocratic exercise of authority by which it was effected. But in controlling the expenses of the College festivals, Dr. Bentley suffered his zeal for economy to impair the character of hospitality which had always distinguished that noble foundation. On the various feasts of the Church, the two audit days, and the Founder's Commemoration, it had been an immemorial practice for the College to entertain in its capacious hall a large party of persons from the rest of the University. On Trinity Sunday in particular the Heads and other dignitaries were invited, and always made it a point to pay respect to the College by dining in their robes. The Master finding that the charge of these festivals had become enormous, and amounted on some one day to thirty shillings a head, instead of making such regulations as might obviate the abuse, while the hospitality and splendour were preserved, adopted the unfortunate plan of forbidding the invitations altogether; strictly limiting the charge to a sum sufficient to provide a good dinner for the members of the House, and ordering that, if any one introduced a guest, he should pay his quota himself. This order was fatal to all public hospitality; and the society, mortified at the abolition of what they regarded as one of their glories, gave a harsh interpretation to the measure, and considered it as a paltry saving of money, to be devoted to the expenses of the Master's private establishment.



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VIII.  
1707.

Jordan the  
steward.

The stewardship of the College having descended in its triennial course to Mr. Jordan, a Fellow who is stated to have been sometimes affected in his intellects, Bentley discovered, on examining his accounts at the audit, that he had charged 50*l.* for the article of wine beyond what had been usual in one year: and, as the poor man could give no reasonable account of this excess, he caused him to be fined that sum, and deposed from his office with all publicity of disgrace. As there was no suspicion of wilful malversation on the part of Jordan, who seems to have been imposed upon by others, this was a very severe proceeding: indeed it was felt to be so three years afterwards, when the penalty was remitted upon condition of his subscribing 30*l.* towards the repairs of the chapel. The Master seized this opportunity ‘while’ (to use his own expression) ‘the iron was hot,’ and extorted the consent of the Seniority to an arrangement, by which the two fiscal offices of Junior-bursar and Steward were confined to the younger part of the society. The statutes exclude from them all Bachelors or Doctors of Divinity; and it was now enacted that thenceforth none should be elected who were above seven years standing as Masters of Arts; that being the earliest period at which a theological degree can be taken: at the same time the emoluments of the two places were reduced to the original salaries of 4*l.* and 3*l.* a measure intended only to serve a temporary purpose, by removing an obstacle to a favourite plan of the Master’s which will shortly be developed. Indeed it was not equitable, that, while the stipends of other offices were augmented in proportion to the altered value of money, these two, which did not remunerate the holders with rank or dignity, should be brought back to their original allowance: nor was it reasonable to expect gentlemen to devote their time and attention



to these troublesome departments for so paltry a consideration.

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1707.

Bentley's economy descended to such minute particulars, that he made a decree against any Fellow being allowed to receive his commons in his chambers instead of the Hall, except with the special permission of the Master or his deputy: a regulation which, in the eyes of the Society, seemed to be designed not so much to save money, as to make himself the arbiter of the comforts of those, whose health or convenience might require such an indulgence.

In years of great expence, when there remained no other money to distribute, the emoluments of the Fellows were confined to their commons, a small statutable stipend, and 'the pandoxator's dividend.' The last was so called from its having originated in a surplus stock in that officer's department. It was fixed at the following sums: 20*l.* to the Master; 10*l.* to each of the eight Seniors; and 5*l.* to each of the other Fellows who had resided in College not less than half the year. At the audit of 1707 Bentley, declaring that these proportions were objectionable, and that the money ought to be divided like the rest of the College stock, put a final period to 'the pandoxator's dividend' by the force of his prerogative, as it could not be issued without the Master's consent. His object was not the correction of an abuse, for this dividend had, in fact, the advantage of priority over the other; but he found it an obstacle to a grand financial scheme then in his contemplation. The season chosen for its abolition was unfortunate, since it aggravated the distress, and increased the murmurs of the Fellows<sup>30</sup>.

Pandox-  
ator's divi-  
dend.

Dec. 1707.

For the first five or six years of his mastership, in

<sup>30</sup> Bentley's *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 22. Miller's *Remarks*, p. 66—71. *True State of Trinity College*, p. 40.



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1707.

Malversa-  
tion in elect-  
ing a Fellow.

Oct. 1,  
1706.

Pre-elec-  
tions.

all elections to scholarships and fellowships he had regarded only the merit of the candidates; and in consequence a series of able and deserving young men had been admitted into the society. But at the election in 1706 he is stated to have made the first deviation from the rule of merit. The Vice Master, Dr. Wolfran Stubbe, a much respected personage, who had formerly filled the Hebrew professorship, was generally a supporter of the Master's measures: among the candidates was his nephew and heir, Edmund Stubbe, a young man who is represented as a profligate, and in every way unworthy of the station. Bentley, to gratify the old gentleman, proposed and elected him a supernumerary Fellow, to succeed upon a 'presumed vacancy.' In this act there was a two-fold malversation. The candidates for fellowships being superannuated when of the standing of Masters of Arts, there had formerly been a custom of pre-electing to future vacancies. This practice, though not expressly forbidden by the statutes, was contrary to their general spirit, as discouraging the emulation of students by pre-occupying what ought to be their rewards. It had, accordingly, been strictly prohibited by a Royal Letter of King James I. Dr. Bentley, at the same time that he condemned pre-elections, termed this act only a *presumption*; thereby taking a distinction between the two cases which made no practical difference. Having once ventured upon this step, he had frequent recourse to the same method; and in the following year, two more fellows were elected by 'presumption.' The choice of an unworthy person, whom he afterwards termed 'the worst character that ever entered a college,' was never insisted upon by his accusers, out of tenderness towards the uncle, Dr. Stubbe; but it became known in the world; and we are told by Whiston that, in his opinion, the



present was Bentley's first breach of integrity, and that 'having made this deviation from the path of justice he never afterwards returned to it <sup>31</sup>.'

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1708.

The Master continued to take such liberties in the administration of Trinity College, as prove that he considered himself absolute and irresponsible. Of this a glaring instance occurs in the expulsion of two Fellows *propter crimina majora*, both of whom he allows to have been 'men of good learning and excellent parts,' but adds, that 'they were on these very accounts more dangerous to the society, having fallen into such ill courses and enormities, as could not be tolerated there, without infecting and ruining all the youth <sup>32</sup>.' The first was Mr. John Wyvill, whose offence consisted in having cut to pieces some College plate, with an intention, as was supposed, of melting and selling it. Of his guilt there was no doubt; but his expulsion was summary, and without the forms of the statute, which enacts that this punishment shall be inflicted only with the consent of the Master and major part of the eight Seniors, after a regular citation, hearing, and proof of guilt <sup>33</sup>.

Expulsion  
of two  
Fellows.

Wyvill.

<sup>31</sup> *Whiston's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 106. His account of this transaction, though he places it three years too early, is substantially correct, as I find from MSS. observations written by persons in College at the time. Indeed he asserts that Bentley himself told him that in this instance he had stepped from the rule *Detur Digniori*, and that he had done it with reluctance. I find it also stated that this Edmund Stubbe had paid attention to a niece of the Master, then visiting at the lodge, and that a marriage was in contemplation: in which case Dr. Stubbe's fortune, not less than 10,000*l.*, was to have been settled on the young couple. If there be good foundation for this story, it will at least prove that Bentley, at the time of the election, could not have been aware of the badness of his character. He proved a disgrace to the College; but fortunately in about four years he relieved it, by marrying an innkeeper's daughter at Newmarket.

<sup>32</sup> *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 29.

<sup>33</sup> John Wyvill was B.A. in 1701-2 and elected Fellow in 1704. He was one of the representatives of the University, in the deputation sent to Frankfort on the Oder, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. It is possible that he might have distressed himself by his expenses on that



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1708.

Breval.

The other Fellow expelled at the same time was John Durant Breval, son of Dr. Breval, a Prebendary of Westminster. He had been guilty of some foolish or criminal conduct in Berkshire: being suspected of an improper connection with a married lady, on her experiencing harsh usage from her jealous husband, he interfered for her protection; when the result was that he beat the husband, and was held to bail for the assault. Conceiving, however, that there was an informality in the proceedings against him, he neglected to appear at the assizes, and was in consequence outlawed. In this stage of the business, Dr. Bentley laid before the Seniority the case of the two delinquents, and proposed their immediate expulsion. Respecting Wyvill little or no opposition was made; though the Board did not conceive that this discussion amounted to a final sentence, and no entry to that effect was made in the College register. But to such a proceeding against Breval some of the Seniors expressed their positive objection, observing that of the two offences charged against him, the one for which he was liable to expulsion, the adultery, rested upon mere rumour and suspicion; adding, that if they proceeded upon such grounds to deprive him of his freehold, 'he would have an action against the College.' This apprehension the Master treated with contempt, saying, that 'his father was just dead in poor circumstances, and all his family were beggars.' Subsequently to the meeting he entered in the Conclusion-book the following memorandum, the wording of which is peculiar: "April the 5th, 1708. Ordered

occasion. He confessed in a letter to the Master the justice with which he had been treated. Subsequently he bore a good character, and became Chaplain to the Bishop of London, Dr. Compton. At the trial of the Master, when this expulsion was made one of the articles of accusation, Wyvill refused to bear evidence against him, declaring that he had no ground of complaint.



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by the Master and Seniors that the two Fellowships, late of Mr. Wyvill and Mr. Breval, be declared void."

It was deposed by several of the Seniors that no consent was given at the Board, and no entry made in their presence. In this proceeding, which is one of the clearest cases of malversation proved against him, Bentley seems to have believed that he had extorted a sort of consent from his council, and so little was he accustomed to have his measures crossed that he held in contempt all forms that stood in the way of his sovereign will. The sentence itself he believed to be just. We find Breval indeed some years afterwards asserting upon oath his innocence of the adultery, and his belief that the Master, in thus oppressing him, was actuated by pique against himself for a refusal to vote according to his wishes at an election, and against his father, owing to some dispute in the Convocation. But irregular as such an exercise of power certainly was, there is no reason to suppose him influenced by those or any other sinister motives. The presumption of Breval's guilt was very strong; nor was it diminished by the pretence of his friends, that 'he was a sort of romantic Platonic lover<sup>34</sup>.' The Master alleged in defence of his conduct towards this gentleman, that 'he had been guilty of gambling with young men of the College, and winning their money;' a charge which, if true, called for immediate expulsion. But as no mention had been made of it at the time, this allegation supplies no justification of his proceeding.

 Illegality of  
the proceed-  
ing.

Mr. Breval having nothing to depend upon but his fellowship for subsistence, immediately joined the

 Account of  
Breval.

<sup>34</sup> *Miller's Remarks on Dr. Bentley's Letter*, p. 81. Blomer, who was a friend of Breval, and nearly of the same standing, mentions that the latter, in reference to Dr. Bentley's usage of him, said, '*tantum non jugulavit.*' *Full View of Dr. Bentley's Letter*, p. 76.



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army in Flanders as a volunteer, and soon obtained an ensign's commission. Here his talents, address, and skill in different languages, attracted the notice of the Duke of Marlborough, who employed him in several negotiations. Having served in the army with reputation, on the return of peace he travelled through Europe with Lord Malpas, and published an account of his tour in three folio volumes. He afterwards became a wit and poet of some note about town, and produced various dramatic pieces at the theatres. But at length, in a luckless hour, he provoked the resentment of Pope by writing a farce called 'The Confederates,' in ridicule of 'Three Hours after Marriage,' the rejected production of Pope, Arbuthnot, and Gay; and was accordingly exalted into the unenviable immortality of the *Dunciad* <sup>35</sup>.

Strong measures of the Master.

Many other of his acts show that Dr. Bentley did not entertain the least apprehension of being called to account before a superior. He chose a layman as one of the four *Sacellani* or *Conducts*, whose duty is to read prayers daily in the College chapel; telling him that he would dispense with his taking Orders, and allow him to hold his appointment till seven years after his Master of Arts' degree <sup>36</sup>. He assigned to Mr. Hacket, one of the Fellows, a small piece of garden ground, hitherto used by the College cooks for growing kitchen herbs, saying that he exercised this right 'as lord of the soil.' Finding that his measures excited much outcry in the society, he resolved to check the rising spirit of sedition by a new and extraordinary mode of punishment; *discommoning*

He discommunes some Fellows.

<sup>35</sup> See an account of Captain Breval in *Nichols's Literary Anecdotes*, vol. i. p. 254.

<sup>36</sup> This was done in imitation of the provision of a totally different statute, which allows the *Fellows* to remain laymen till that period. But it is indispensable that the *Conducts* shall be clergymen. "Quatuor sint presbyteri, et appellentur Sacellani."



those Fellows whom he designed to censure. Thus he 'put out of commons' Mr. Barwell, who was approaching to the rank of a Senior, because he was in the habit of condemning the proceedings of the Master: he inflicted the same punishment on Mr. Eden, the junior bursar, for hesitating to pay a bill for some work done at the Master's premises; and on two or three other Fellows upon different pretences<sup>37</sup>. For this exercise of power he alleged the authority of the statutes, which occasionally specify, as a penalty of minor offences, *commeatu menstruo privetur* or *multetur*. But for the legal punishment of a Fellow the consent of the Seniority was required. Besides, this sort of penalty, though used as a mode of admonishing refractory students for neglect of College duties, never before appears to have been inflicted upon those of senior standing; and when exercised on persons in Holy Orders, and officers of the establishment, became an unseemly and intolerable indignity. To all complaints of this proceeding he replied, that 'it was but *lusus jocusque*,' and that he 'was not warm yet'<sup>38</sup>.

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These and several other particulars of Bentley's government continued to excite discontent: and the outcry was increased by the profuse expenditure of

1709.  
Attempts to  
take away  
the combi-  
nationroom.

<sup>37</sup> Eden demurred to the payment of 15*l*. for a hen-house, which the Master had erected in his yard, alleging that it was done without leave of the Seniors. Bentley told him, when he 'put him out of commons,' that *he would not be kicked by an ass*. As this measure was speedily followed by the Bursar's submission, and the payment of the bill, it was observed in College, that the Master, by calling him *an ass*, had made him appear one ever since. *Miller's Remarks*, p. 175.

<sup>38</sup> See *Miller's Remarks*, p. 120. *Blomer's Full View*, p. 94. *The True State of Trinity College*, p. 50 and 81. Dr. Bentley, in his *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, defends this 'discommoning,' urging that it was not so much a punishment, as 'a reprehension, a disgrace, a denouncing, an accusation;' and adding, that 'the parties themselves submitted, asked pardon for their faults, and returned thanks to him for the clemency of his proceeding.'



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the Lodge, which, it must be confessed, had become much greater than under any of his predecessors. He soon discovered that 'the Combination Room,' where the Society are in the habit of assembling after dinner, was the place in which he and his proceedings were loudly and continually censured; and he be-thought him of the desperate expedient of silencing at once the voice of opposition, by removing the scene on which it was exerted. He accordingly attempted to deprive the Fellows of their Combination Room, and to convert it into chambers, alleging that the statutes had made no mention of such a place of meeting, (although every other College in England possessed one), and urging that it was a source of mischief and dissention. The unanimous resistance of the society made him abandon this scheme, but the attempt was long remembered with indignation and resentment.

Aspires to  
the bishop-  
rick of Chi-  
chester.

The feuds in Trinity College had not yet attracted public notice; while the great and successful efforts of the Master to advance the splendour and credit of the society were generally known, and prepared people to witness his further advancement. On the vacancy of the bishoprick of Chichester in April 1709, Dr. Bentley was a candidate for that dignity. This fact I discover from two letters, which have been preserved, addressed by his friend Baron Spanheim to the Earl of Pembroke and Bishop Moore, soliciting their interest with the Queen in his favour, and urging that such a promotion would be attended with the universal applause of the learned throughout the world. These letters I copy in a note, as a specimen of the address and delicacy, as well as zeal, with which the veteran diplomatist endeavours to serve his friend in a matter, where his proper character of an ambassador gave



him but little pretence for interference <sup>39</sup>. The quarters to which the Baron addressed his applications

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<sup>39</sup> *A My Lord Comte de Pembroke, Grand Admiral de la Grande Bretagne.*

A Londres le 27 Avril, 1709.

My Lord, Je suis bien redevable a la bonté, avec laquelle il a plu a Vostre Excellence de prendre part a l'estat de ma santé, laquelle, par la grace de Dieu, se trouve autant que retablie, et à me donner lieu de luy en aller temoigner en peu de jours ma reconnoissance. Que pensera-t-Elle cependant de la liberté que je prends de luy dire, que j'apprens que l'Evesché de Chichester se trouve vaquant, et que Monsr. le Docteur Bentley est sur les rangs pour y pouvoir estre avancé par la grace de Sa Majesté Britannique. Je sçay que V<sup>re</sup>. Excell<sup>ce</sup>. en connoist le merite, et n'ignore pas, qu'il est considéré non seulement en Angleterre, mais encore dans les pays estrangers, pour un des plus sçavans hommes de nostre temps, et un des ornemens de sa nation. En sorte que le choix d'un si digne personnage à cette dignité, s'il venoit à avoir lieu, ne pourroit que rencontrer une approbation generale. Et bien qu'il ne convienne en aucune manière à un Ministre Etranger, comme moy, de me mesler en ce que peut regarder des affaires ou des établissemens du dedans du Royaume, l'estime particulier que je fais et du merite et de l'amitié du dit Docteur Bentley, et la connoissance que j'ay de l'estime que V<sup>re</sup>. Excell<sup>ce</sup>. en fait, m'a donné cette confiance qu'Elle ne prendroit pas en mauvaise part, si je luy marquois par ces lignes, combien je serois sensible à l'appui et l'approbation qu'il luy plairoit de contribuer en faveur de cette promotion du Docteur Bentley à l'Evesché de Chichester. Je la supplie au moins de me pardonner cette liberté, et de me croire avec des attachemens particuliers, &c.

E. SPANHEIM.

*Reverendissimo Viro, JOANNI MORO, Episcopo Eliensi, S. P. D.*

E. SPANHEMIUS.

Nescio quid de me statues, quod intermissa fuerint aliquamdiu mea te conveniendi, partumque semel eruditæ tuæ consuetudinis amicitiaque usum excolendi ulterius officia. Mitto, quod a pluribus septimanis gravi catharro adfectuque pectoris molesto laborarim, unde vix adhuc plane convalui. Illud vero, quod nunc forte se mihi offert, scribendi ad te argumentum haud omittere potui; idque eo magis, quod istud tibi haud ingratum fore, neque a te alienum, possum facile arbitrari. Fato functum præteritis diebus Episcopum Cesterciensem, ac simul inter illius pontificii candidatos exstare Cl. Drem. Bentleium, uno eodemque tempore ad me relatum est. Quum vero, non solum ex quo pedem in hanc Britanniam ante octennium, hujusce mei muneris, quo fungor hactenus, intuitu, intuli, mihi cum eo, ob singularem in omni literarum genere doctrinam, amicitiaë usus intercesserit; sed jam ante ex editis aliquot Dissertationibus, ad Malelam Antiochenum in primis, ut nascens tum eruditæ Britanniaë sidus et ornamentum, quamquam plane ignotum hactenus, publice celebrassem, non potui non, ut hanc ornatissimam Spartam vir doctissimus amicissi-



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were judiciously chosen. The Queen had lately shown, by her nomination of Dr. Blackall and Sir William Dawes to the sees of Exeter and Chester, in opposition to the recommendation of her prime minister, that she was determined to follow her own will in such appointments. Of all the ministers who had then access to her Majesty, the Earl of Pembroke, the Lord High Admiral, was supposed to have the greatest share of her confidence; and she was known to be in the habit of consulting Bishop Moore upon ecclesiastical subjects. The solicitations made on this occasion were unsuccessful; but they probably were not without some effect; as we find from a letter of a cabinet minister, in the following year, on the vacancy of the bishoprick of Bristol, that Dr. Bentley was understood to be in the Queen's contemplation. That see, however, was not filled till after the great ministerial revolution which ensued, when it was given to Dr. John Robinson, who became, shortly afterwards, Lord Privy Seal, and plenipotentiary at the Treaty of Utrecht, and is the last ecclesiastic in England who has held any of the high offices of state <sup>40</sup>.

*musque posset consequi, animosus optare. Etsi eadem opera haud minus intelligerem, neutiquam Ministrum Principis externi decere, ut se rebus vestris interioribus, minime autem Ecclesiasticis, immisceat; neque id etiam a me hic agi omnino profitear. Id vero pridem mihi constat, quo loco ipse Bentleium habeas; ut non sim dubius, quin sponte patrocinio tuo, et apud Serenissimam Potentissimamque Reginam commendatione, hoc ejus incrementum sis prosequuturus; unde non in hac solum Britannia, sed foris etiam commendatissimi nominis virum sacris illis infulis ornatum omnes grato animo intelligent. Unum hic addam, quod te facturum mihi jam spondeo, ut hoc meum pro Cl. Bentleio studium, etsi forte minus mihi conveniens, boni consulas; meque amicitia tua benevolentiaque, quod fecisti hactenus, complecti deinceps non dedigneris. Dabam Londini V. Kal. Mai. Anno MDCCIX.*

<sup>40</sup> The Earl of Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough. "Tuesday morning. I am this moment informed that the Bishop of Bristol [Dr. Hall] is dead. Upon all accounts Dr. Willis would be the properest person. There are two other men very good, that the Lord Treasurer says that the Queen is well affected to, Dr. Mandeville and Dr. Bentley. This is a time



Though the completion of his Horace was still delayed, some specimens of Bentley's genius and learning appeared in the publications of other scholars. Of these the most considerable was a body of emendations on Cicero's Tusculan Questions, attached to the edition of that book by Mr. John Davies, a Fellow of Queen's College. This gentleman, who had already appeared before the world as the editor of Maximus Tyrius, of Cæsar, and of Minucius Felix, designed to publish all those works of Cicero which Grævius had left unfinished: the present specimen appeared from the University press, and was dedicated to Bishop Moore, the general patron of rising scholars, who had accommodated him with the use of the same precious volume which Bentley had formerly procured for his friend Grævius. This work is universally known, and continues to be the most popular edition of the Tusculans. The performance was creditable to the editor as a young man, and it would perhaps have been better, if in his subsequent editions he had used the same moderation, and abstained from altering the text of Cicero without authority. Bentley, having obtained a sight of the book before publication, perused it with interest, and noted a great number of corrections which he was disposed to make in the text: whereupon Davies entreated him to write his observations on those passages, to be printed as an appendix to the edition. With these solicitations our Aristarchus complied, and produced a series of notes occupying ninety-four pages, entitled *Richardi Bentleyi Emendationes in Ciceronis Tusculanas*, far surpassing all preceding commentaries, and claiming a high rank among the works

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Davies's  
Cicero's  
Tusculan  
Questions.

Bentley's  
Appendix.

that makes this of more consequence than ordinary; so that I beg you would mention it to the Lord Treasurer as soon as you can, that he may not plead engagements." *Coxe's Life of the Duke of Marlborough*, vol. iii. p. 169.



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of Bentley himself. We discover in these emendations more acquaintance with the philosophical works of Cicero, than his former writings could have led people to expect. Every part is entertaining as well as instructive to the scholar; nor is there any fault to be found with the composition, except the self-complacent and boastful tone which pervades the whole. The most valuable notes are those containing his corrections of fragments of old Latin Poets, with which the Tusculans abound. These quotations had been miserably corrupted and disjointed, owing to an ignorance of the laws of metre adopted by the dramatic poets of Rome: and all scholars before Bentley, without exception, had committed great errors in attempting to correct them. Persons who are not acquainted with these metrical notes, will have but an inadequate notion of Bentley's skill and correctness of ear, which could detect immediately the rhythm of verses, defaced by mistakes of transcribers, mixed up with the text of Cicero, and constructed in measures abounding with licence, and difficult to be caught by a modern reader. If we would fully appreciate his merit in this department, it should be recollected that he was the first who discovered the *true* laws of these verses, and that whatever knowledge we now possess upon the subject may be said to originate with him. In one place he held out expectations of publishing, some time or other, both Plautus and Terence, a task for which he displayed such peculiar qualifications<sup>41</sup>.

Letter to  
Davies.

Bentley prefixed to these Notes a short letter to Davies, bestowing upon the edition fully as much compliment as it merited; and having so done, he assumed the privilege of a friend, and animadverted

<sup>41</sup> Among the metrical notes, I would particularly point out to the reader, those on Lib. I. liv. III. xii. III. xix.



rather freely upon the errors and oversights of the editor. Such defects he excuses upon the score of his youth; an apology, we might suppose, not very acceptable to a person of the age of thirty, who had been already for six years a classical editor. In fact he schools him, in the course of the appendix, in so magisterial a tone, that a less devoted disciple would have turned refractory, and declined to publish to the world so much censure of himself: but Davies, who regarded Bentley as little less than a divinity, far from being displeased, expressed his unqualified gratitude, and continued to the day of his death to extend to him, not only his admiration, but his zealous and devoted friendship <sup>42</sup>.

There was a particular reason which, as I apprehend, induced Bentley to comply with Davies's request in writing these notes. The only member of the literary republic from whom he had experienced rough treatment, since the controversy on Phalaris, was James Gronovius of Leyden, who had been attacking him in almost all his writings for the last ten years. This laborious professor, perhaps the most voluminous of classical editors, has disgraced a name which would otherwise be honourable in literature, by his habit of assailing with insolent language his rivals in criticism; a practice which he pursued for nearly half a century. At this time his favourite amusement was vilifying

James Gronovius.

<sup>42</sup> Respecting these notes he thus expresses himself in the preface. "Ultimum locum tenent Emendationes, quas meo rogatu scribere dignatus est Vir præstantissimus RICHARDUS BENTLEIUS. Illi propterea gratias quam maximas habeo atque ago; nec dispari animo erunt ii, qui suo quæque pretio solent æstimare. Quantopere vero mihi placeant, melius indicare nequeo, quam si tester eas Auctore suo dignas videri: Hujus enim summam eruditionem ac mirum acumen exosculantur omnes, qui non sunt aut invidi, aut ab hisce literis alieni." In the editions subsequent to the first this paragraph is omitted.



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VIII.  
1709.

Hostility to  
Bentley.

and traducing the three most learned men of the age, Spanheim, Bentley, and Kuster. With Bentley he appears to have been angry on account of his success in correcting the fragments of Callimachus, some of which he had himself attempted in vain a long time before. Thus provoked, our critic cannot be accused of indulging hasty resentment: but finding at length that ten years could not subdue this ill-nature, and that he was become a perpetual object of the malevolence of one whose talents and learning he held in small esteem, he resolved to make his implacable adversary feel the recoil of his own weapons. Gronovius having published a new edition of the works of Cicero, corrected from Gruter's, the appendix to the Tusculans afforded Bentley an opportunity of retaliating on the aggressor: accordingly he shows him no quarter, but lashes him in a style of severity which he had never before adopted. Whatever may be the literary justice of this proceeding, the reader must regret the animosity evinced towards Gronovius, whose offences do not appear along with the castigation, and whose consideration as a scholar, (being termed by his adversary *homunculus eruditione mediocri, ingenio nullo*), hardly deserved so much notice from one of Bentley's eminence<sup>43</sup>.

Needham's  
edition of  
Hierocles.

About the same time our critic gave great assistance to Mr. Peter Needham, a Fellow of St. John's College, who was publishing an edition of the Commentary of Hierocles on the Golden Verses of Pythagoras.

<sup>43</sup> In speaking of the father of Gronovius, he inserts a sentence which, at all events, ought to have been spared: *Ut primus ibi restituit Jo. Frid. Gronovius, acerrimo vir judicio, doctrina autem et acumine admirabili; qui, si in vivis esset, nihil credo ægrius ferret, quam filium sibi esse tam parenti dissimilem.* In Tusc. V. 23. Other signal instances of his severity towards James Gronovius appear in the notes on Tusc. IV. 21. V. 37; and in the latter part of the Dedicatory Epistle to Davies.



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This scholar, like his friend Davies, was patronised by Bishop Moore, and already known to the public as a Greek editor<sup>44</sup>. His present undertaking appears on some accounts unfortunately selected: Hierocles was an author printed originally from a bad copy; no good manuscripts had hitherto been used in correcting the editions, and little or no critical skill had been exerted upon the text. There existed in the Medicean library at Florence a singularly good manuscript, the readings of which Needham in vain endeavoured to procure through some powerful intercession. Finding however that Fabricius, the compiler of the *Bibliotheca Græca*, possessed a collation of this valuable copy, he used the interest of his friend Professor Sike to obtain it: but here some unlucky accident interfered. Fabricius wrote to inform him that he had complied with his request; but the packet never reached him. Instead of such assistance, he received from Bentley a very large collection of emendations and conjectures which had occurred to him in the perusal of Hierocles, but scarcely a word of note to confirm them: and Needham, who regarded the genius of our critic with unbounded veneration, and deemed his sagacity of conjecture as even more infallible than the authority of manuscripts, admitted into his text without hesitation almost all the Benteian emendations. In so doing he consulted neither his own reputation, nor that of his illustrious friend; for immediately after the appearance of his book, Christopher Wolfius, of Leipsic, published a review of it in the form of an

 Bentley's  
emenda-  
tions of Hi-  
erocles.

Wolfius.

<sup>44</sup> Peter Needham had published at the University press, in 1704, an edition of the *Geoponica*. He took his Bachelor of Arts' degree in 1696-97; M.A. in 1700; B.D. in 1707; and D.D. in 1717. On Feb. 14, 1705-6, he was elected Rector of Ovington in Norfolk, a living in the patronage of the University.



CHAP.  
VIII.  
1709.

Warren.

epistle, restoring the text, and overturning many of the conjectures upon the authority of that very collation which Needham had failed to obtain. Many years afterwards, Dr. Richard Warren, a Fellow of Jesus College, published an edition of Hierocles, for the avowed purpose of giving a text free from the conjectural emendations introduced by Needham, and supplying the true readings from the Florentine manuscript; not without some misplaced asperity against Bentley; who had in fact never recommended that absolute and implicit adoption of his conjectures, which his admiring friend judged to be their due <sup>45</sup>.

Newton's  
Principia.

Shortly afterwards Bentley succeeded in effecting a matter which he had much at heart, the publication of a new and improved edition of Sir Isaac Newton's Principia. The first impression being entirely exhausted, the lovers of philosophy were in a manner debarred access to the fountain of truth. The book had not been received on the continent as its merits demanded, and the greatest injustice had been done to the fame of its illustrious author. This seems principally attributable to Leibnitz, who had already begun to practise those arts which were afterwards so conspicuously exposed. By denying the truth of part of Sir Isaac's discoveries, and by assuming to himself

<sup>45</sup> The title of this book is, '*Hieroclis in Aurea Carmina Commentarius Gr. Lat. Græca accuratius nunc recognita, et ad MSS. Codicum fidem exacta, plurimisque in locis e Gudiana Medicæi Codicis collatione emendata, una cum Notis subjunctis, edidit R. W. S. T. P. Coll. Jes. Cant. nuper Socius. Londini, 1742.*' All the knowledge possessed of this manuscript proceeded from the collation made long before by Marquard Gudius, the well-known copyist of inscriptions and manuscripts. The long postponement of the rival edition of Dr. Warren is a curious circumstance. At this time he was a Fellow of Jesus College, a little junior to Needham; but for some reason or other, he put off his publication for thirty-three years; and at length it came forth *in the year of Bentley's death*, and long after that of Needham, when the age of Warren himself was between sixty and seventy. The origin of his dislike for Bentley will be found in a subsequent period of this history.



the credit of part, he had laboured not without success, to detract from his glory, and to transfer it to his own brow. It could not be denied that some of the demonstrations in the *Principia* were imperfect, and that others, depending upon experiments, had not received all the illustration of which they were capable. A new edition was therefore required, both for the interests of science and the reputation of the philosopher: and Dr. Bentley, who lived in great intimacy with him, long solicited and urged him to this work. But Sir Isaac's avocations as Master of the Mint, and other public duties, had for some years abstracted his attention from mathematical pursuits; and he was unwilling that his book should re-appear without a careful revision and improvement. At length Bentley effected his object by engaging Professor Cotes to superintend the publication at the University press. To his care Sir Isaac committed this trust; and never perhaps was more zeal and ability experienced in a literary coadjutor than he found in this admirable young man. The feelings which Cotes expressed at the outset of the undertaking, continued during the three years that the work was in progress<sup>46</sup>. The improvements which he suggested were numerous and

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1709.

Bentley induces him to publish a new edition.

June, 1709.

<sup>46</sup> Cotes, in his first letter to Sir Isaac, thus expresses himself.

" Sir,

Cambridge, August 18, 1709.

" The earnest desire I have to see a new edition of your *Principia* makes me somewhat impatient till we receive your copy of it, which you were pleased to promise me about the middle of last month you would send down in about a fortnight's time. I hope you will pardon me for this uneasiness, from which I cannot free myself, and for giving you this trouble to let you know it. I have been so much obliged by yourself and by our book, that (I desire you to believe me) I think myself bound in gratitude to take all the care I possibly can that it shall be correct.

" Your obliged servant,

" ROGER COTES."

" For Sir Isaac Newton at his house in Jermyn-street,  
near St. James's Church, Westminster."



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important, and in most cases were adopted by Sir Isaac, who took pains to make this monument of his genius as perfect as possible. The correspondence between Newton and Cotes, during this whole period, is in the highest degree important and interesting to the lovers of science. Their letters, nearly three hundred in number, are preserved in Trinity College: and I now express publicly, what I have often expressed in private, a wish and request that some one of the many accomplished Newtonians, who are resident in that Society, would favour the world by publishing the whole collection<sup>47</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> Some letters, which are, properly speaking, part of this series, are among the collection of Sir Isaac Newton's papers, belonging to the Earl of Portsmouth, at Hartsbourne House, Hampshire, where they were obligingly shown to me by the Hon. H. Fellowes.



CHAPTER IX.

*A party among the junior Fellows in favour of the Master—History of the College dividends—Bentley issues proposals for a new scheme of dividends—Change in the Master's proportion—Scheme of composition for customary allowances—Objections of the Fellows to the proposals—The Master's design for improving the College preferment—The proposals rejected by the Seniors—Mr. Miller, a lay-fellow, encourages their resistance—Violent behaviour of the Master—The Fellows resolve to complain to the Visitor—Dr Colbatch—Bentley deprives Miller of his fellowship—The Seniors reinstate him—Half the Fellows petition the Bishop of Ely on the statute for the removal of the Master—Bentley publishes a letter to the Bishop—Defence of himself, and abuse of his prosecutors—Replies by Miller, Blomer, White, Paris, Partridge—Mr. Ashenhurst prosecuted for libelling the Queen—Scandal occasioned by these feuds—Dr. King's Horace in Trinity College—Bentley again writes to the Bishop of Ely—Le Clerc publishes the fragments of Menander and Philemon—Bentley writes a censure of this book, under the title of Phileleutherus Lipsiensis—Sends it to Utrecht to be published by Feter Burman—Correspondence with Le Clerc—Gronovius publishes a book against both Bentley and Le Clerc—Bergler's review—De Pauw, Philargyrius Cantabrigiensis—Le Clerc's defence.*

DR. BENTLEY having excited against himself the clamour and resentment of a large portion of his Fellows, was too much an adept in the art of governing to omit any means of dividing the malcontents, and establishing an opposite party in his own interest. This he effected by carefully watching every opportunity of advancing the fortunes of those who showed a disposition to adhere to him. His station as Head of so large a College, his acquaintance in the great world, and his eminent reputation naturally invested him with an extensive description of patronage : besides the power of assigning pupils in College, he had opportunities of recommending the younger Fellows to curacies, chaplaincies, tutorships, and other situa-

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1709.

Bentley forms a party among the Fellows.



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1709.

Sealing-  
money.

tions. Thus his friends were sure to be provided for, while vexation, loss, and proscription seemed the only lot of his opponents. His system of advancing young men to College offices, and breaking through the custom which had long confined all emolument to length of standing, engaged in his interest many of the juniors, who now saw the road to advancement laid open. In the meantime, the numbers and reputation of his College experienced a considerable accession; nor could it be denied, that the Master distinguished young men of merit, and procured for them the notice and the patronage of the great. The complaint of the Seniors, that he governed arbitrarily and without their assistance, had little weight with their younger brethren; some of whom regarded it with indifference, others with satisfaction. The subject of 'sealing-money' was an old bone of contention in the College: the statutes enjoin that the sixteen first Fellows shall be present at setting the seal to leases and other acts of the corporation, allotting to each one shilling for his trouble, and two shillings to the Master: but an old custom, the origin of which could not be traced, had increased the allowances for each sealing ten-fold; and the amount of these payments in the course of a year was considerable. The juniors, who had no share in this profit, had always contended, that all beyond the statutable allowance of the sealers ought to be thrown into the common stock: the Master now declared himself to be of the same opinion, and incited them to remonstrate against the practice as a grievance<sup>1</sup>. He pursued a similar

<sup>1</sup> See Bentley's account of this matter, in his *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 20; and a counter-statement in *Miller's Remarks*, p. 57 to 60. Bentley appears to overstate the amount of these payments, when he says that they averaged 300*l.* a year. The custom, however, continued till the year 1784, when the fixed sum of 10*l.* was assigned to each of the sixteen



course in encouraging complaints against an augmentation in the stipends of the Vice Master, Senior Dean, and Senior Bursar; making it known, *ad augendam invidiam*, that it had originated during the Usurpation. In this instance there was less ground for complaint than in the last: the altered value of money had rendered an increase of the small salaries prescribed by the statutes, not only reasonable, but necessary; and, even then, the trouble of those important offices was but poorly compensated.

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1709.

Salaries of  
officers.

By these and similar methods he secured a considerable party among the juniors; of whom the first in talents and reputation was Professor Cotes: a name calculated to reflect honour upon any cause which he embraced. But the most active of his adherents was Mr. Ashenhurst, a Fellow of two years' standing, whose character, having been painted only by enemies, is represented in as unfavourable a light as possible: he is stated to have been a bustling, forward, and impudent man, of unabashed assurance and overbearing conversation: his best trait was the unshaken fidelity with which he continued throughout life to serve the interests of his principal. Being a medical student, and having commenced his practice at Cambridge, he was constantly on the spot, and incessantly exerting himself to promote all the views and projects of the Master.

Ashenhurst.

Bentley had for some years meditated an improved method of dividing the College revenues, which he at length proposed to the society, and was resolutely bent upon its accomplishment. The existing system of dividends distributed the surplus money of the College among the Master and Fellows in certain

College  
revenues.

Fellows, for his attendance at reading and sealing all the leases, &c. in the course of the year; a sum not more than a reasonable remuneration for his trouble and loss of time.



CHAP. IX. proportions which had been fixed by a College order  
1709. in the year 1660. The original endowment had  
 allotted to all Fellows chambers and commons free of  
 expense, and had given them stipends varying ac-  
 cording to their academical degree: to a Doctor of  
 Divinity 5*l*, to a Bachelor of Divinity 4*l*, and to a  
 Master of Arts 2*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*. And these were the whole  
 emoluments of a fellowship, except a small allowance  
 for *liberatura* or dress, likewise apportioned according  
 to degrees. But when the depreciation of money had  
 rendered an increase of allowance necessary for the  
 subsistence of gentlemen, and had at the same time  
 increased the revenue, the surplus was disposed in a  
 mode not contemplated by the statutes. The first  
 dividend took place in 1630; in subsequent distribu-  
 tions the sums allotted to the senior and junior Fellows  
 were varied in arbitrary proportions; but it was re-  
 marked that by each successive change the juniors  
 were sufferers. At length, after the Restoration, the  
 Seniority thus arranged the distribution of 2000*l*, the  
 largest sum ever divisible in one year, which was  
 thence termed ‘a whole dividend.’ The Master had  
 150*l*; each of the eight Seniors 50*l*; the ninth and  
 tenth Fellows (called *labourers*, from their generally  
 filling the place of some absent Senior at the board)  
 each 40*l*, the next six 34*l*, and the rest of the Fellows  
 (being M.A.) 25*l*. This scale, by giving the advan-  
 tage to standing alone, held out no encouragement to  
 taking higher degrees; and therein proceeded upon  
 different principles from the statutes. The Master  
 now circulated a paper of proposals for altering the  
 scheme of dividends so as to reduce them to an exact  
 proportion with the stipends. Each sum prescribed  
 by the statutes was to be multiplied by ten: so that a  
 Doctor of Divinity was to have 50*l*, a Bachelor of  
 Divinity 40*l*, a Master of Arts 26*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*, or in that

History of  
dividends.

Bentley  
proposes a  
new scheme  
of dividends.



ratio. That this method was more consonant to the spirit of the foundation than the existing one, is undeniable. The effect of the change would have been to make every Fellow proceed to the higher degrees as soon as his standing allowed ; an object which, as we have already seen, Bentley had much at heart ; and if a due provision had been made for the present Seniors, whose age rendered the taking degrees inconvenient and burdensome, no one could have complained of hardship in the alteration. It admitted indeed of doubt whether it was worth while to disturb an arrangement which had continued fifty years, and, as far as appears, without exciting dissatisfaction. However, the determined resistance which the proposals met with, was occasioned by the increase contemplated in the income of the Master himself.

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1709.

The foundation of Trinity, at the same time that it gave the Fellows the above-mentioned stipends, assigned to the Master 100*l.* for stipend and commons jointly, but without specifying what portion of that sum was for stipend alone. Bentley, in proposing that the dividends of the society should henceforth be in proportion to their respective stipends, of course included the Master in the new scale ; and suggested, in the first instance, that his stipend should be considered as 85*l.*, or seventeen times as great as that of a Doctor ; whence it would follow that his dividend ought to be 850*l.* ; but foreseeing that the largeness of that sum would startle every one, he proposed to fix it at 800*l.* When he discovered that the increase of his share from 150*l.* to 800*l.* raised an outcry against the whole scheme, he issued a new paper of proposals in which he reduced the Master's share to 400*l.* As this was still unpalatable, he finally declared that he would be content with 200*l.*, provided the rest of the project were adopted. But it was shrewdly remarked

Amount of  
the Master's  
dividend.



CHAP. IX. that, if the dividends were once established upon the  
1709. footing of stipends, the old claim for 850*l.* might be revived either by the present Master or his successors.

Customary  
allowances  
to the Mas-  
ter.

Bentley's  
proposal of  
a composi-  
tion.

This, however, constituted but a part of his new proposals. The foundation had provided for the Master three servants, and three horses, to be kept at the public charge, as well as extra-commons: for all which a composition in money had long been established. But by custom and prescription he was also supplied with bread, flour, beer, coals and other fuel, candles, oil, linen, pewter, and a few more articles: this being regarded as a matter of grace and favour, since it rested upon no authority to be found in the statutes. The Doctor now proposed that in lieu of all these particulars he should receive a fixed annual payment, the amount of which he estimated at above 700*l.*; but declared himself satisfied with that sum. The idea of compensation for allowances grounded not on right, but on the grace and indulgence of the College, met with a most unfavourable reception. The plan had, in one point of view, a plausible appearance: it removed a source of uneasiness and complaint, as well as the indelicacy of submitting the details of a domestic establishment to the revision of a board, who were yearly called upon to defray its expenditure. But on the other hand, it was evident that such an arrangement would make the Master entirely independent of the Seniority, and would deprive them of the power even of obliging him by their liberality. Moreover, those customary allowances had been granted with the view of enabling the Head to maintain at his table, and in his family, the decent splendor and hospitality of the leading College: but a pecuniary composition might be expended in a different mode, or in a place remote from Cambridge.



Indeed, there was a strong suspicion that Bentley CHAP. IX. intended, as soon as he had accomplished his scheme, 1709. to live principally at his new residence in Cotton House. It was no secret that he aspired to high rank in the Church: and people believed that his main purpose was to raise his mastership to such a value, as might make it an object of some importance in an arrangement on the vacancy of a mitre. In addition to these considerations, a serious objection was taken to the proposed amount of the composition. The expenses of the lodge in Dr. Bentley's time had already exceeded by 200*l.* or 300*l.* a year the utmost cost under any former Master; in some articles they do really appear to have been enormous<sup>2</sup>: but the claim now made placed the amount higher than it had yet reached even in the year of greatest extravagance: and this payment added to the dividend and other emoluments would have raised the value of the mastership to above 1000*l.* a year, a sum greater by one third than it had ever yet cost the college.

So greatly did these arguments preponderate, that the proposals met with a cold reception among the Fellows. Bentley however was too inflexible in his nature, and too much attached to this particular project, to think of abandoning it. Having first circulated his scheme in December 1708, he tried in the course of the ensuing year a variety of methods to procure its adoption. He made several alterations in the details,

Methods  
used to  
effect his  
projects

<sup>2</sup> In a single year, 1708, the expense of coals, billets, charcoal, &c. for the lodge, was 110*l.* 3*s.* 9*d.* Of ale and small beer, 107*l.* 16*s.* 0*d.*, of bread and flour, 68*l.* 16*s.* 0*d.* Upon the first item his adversary Miller remarks, "One single article, that of his fire, which amounts to 110*l.* 3*s.* 9*d.* is so much, that scarce any nobleman in England, I believe, no Archbishop, spent the like in the time. This fuel must be sold or otherwise embezzled; for if he had kept a continual fire in every chimney of his lodge all that time, it could not have consumed so much." *Some Remarks upon Dr. Bentley's Letter*, p. 169.



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to meet successive objections: but it was observed that in so doing, while he varied the particulars, he always arrived at the same conclusion with respect to the sum total of his demands. He endeavoured to obtain a petition in favour of his scheme from the juniors: to accomplish this, Ashenhurst laboured earnestly; but the result was that only eight persons subscribed it, three of whom were Bachelors in the probationary state of Minor Fellows. This attempt therefore was not only attended with failure, but raised the displeasure of the Seniors, as promoting discord and insubordination in the society. To some of the Board he held out promises, to others threats, with the view of procuring their acquiescence. Unfortunately for the College and the Church, two of that body had occasioned scandal by some particulars in their lives and conversation. It is asserted, that he denounced to those individuals his intention of instituting proceedings against them, as Archdeacon, in an ecclesiastical court; but Dr. Brookbank, his Official, suggested to them that this purpose might be averted by their timely acquiescence in the scheme of dividends and compensation; to which he, being an old College friend, implored them with tears in his eyes to consent<sup>3</sup>. But the argument upon which the Master principally relied for success, was his declared resolution not to suffer a dividend to be issued except upon the footing of his new arrangement. Two 'whole dividends' were ready for payment at the end of the year 1709; and he presumed that the necessities of the Fellows, who had received no dividend for two years, and had indeed devoted the last which had

<sup>3</sup> This story is told by Middleton, in the second part of the *Full and Impartial Account of the Proceedings of the University against Dr. Bentley*, p. 12. He alleges that he had repeatedly heard it from the parties themselves.



been paid to the subscription for the chapel, must soon  
compel them to unconditional submission.

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1709.

Conferences  
at the lodge,

Among other methods of reconciling the society to his measures, we hear of two conferences held at the lodge between the Master and some of the Fellows, in both of which he attempted to gain over by concessions the most respectable and influential among them. Dr. Ayloffe, the Public Orator of the University, having drawn up a paper of objections to the proposals, he suggested a free discussion of the question in a conference. There were present Dr. Cressar and Dr. Ayloffe on one side, Professor Cotes and Mr. Ashenhurst on the other. The Master replied *seriatim* to all the objections, and according to the report of his two seconds, compelled the Orator to recede from each position and finally to declare himself satisfied: but the other party affirmed that this satisfaction applied only to the Master's reducing the estimate of his own dividend from 400*l.* to 200*l.*<sup>4</sup> The other conference was for the purpose of fixing the composition; when he agreed that, upon condition of receiving the proposed 700*l.* a year, he would for the future furnish the lodge at his own expense<sup>5</sup>.

Among the modifications of his dividend scheme, there is one, inscribed by Bentley on the fly-leaf of the Conclusion-book, which contains, along with other regulations, a proposition so wise and beneficial, as deserves to redeem his name from much of the obloquy to which his proceedings are exposed. The church preferment belonging to Trinity College is small and insignificant in comparison with the rest of its endow-

Bentley's  
scheme for  
improving  
the College  
livings.

<sup>4</sup> See the report of this conference on December 12, 1710, in Dr. Bentley's *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 72: and *Miller's Remarks*, p. 150.

<sup>5</sup> I find the account of this second conference in the MS. Diary of Dr. Edward Rud. The Fellows who assisted were Cressar, Hanbury, Reddington, and Cotes.



CHAP. IX. 1709. ment ; and the best livings, instead of being a provision for those quitting college, were generally held by Fellows being College-preachers. The Master perceiving that this was the faulty part of the system, making Fellowships of Trinity rather an impediment than a furtherance to the professional utility of their holders, proposed that one-tenth of every dividend should be set apart for the improvement of College livings ; adding a provision, that all Fellows taking preferment thus augmented, should give a bond to resign their Fellowships within a year. Had such a plan been adopted, and persevered in from that time to the present, the best effects must have ensued ; the College would have had a sufficient number of good livings for those who wished to enter upon the care of a parish at an active period of life ; the succession to Fellowships would have been accelerated ; and the Church would have obtained the services of a number of persons of high talent and acquirements ; too many of whom, owing to the poverty of College preferment, continue all their lives unbeneficed, or only commence the practice of clerical duties at an age when new habits and pursuits are not easily adopted.

His plan  
rejected by  
the Seniors.

Dec. 21,  
1709.

The Doctor having prepared his way by all the methods described, as well as by private discussions, commonly called ‘ closetings,’ with almost all the Seniors, in which every argument of persuasion, interest, or intimidation, was used to secure their assent, at length proposed to the Board his two schemes of dividend and compensation ; when, to his amazement and confusion, they met with unanimous disapprobation. It seems however that the plan of dividends according to degrees might have been carried, had he not insisted upon its being accompanied by that of compensation for his allowances. Having formed a contemptuous opinion of the ability and the firmness



of the Seniors, and having often witnessed their dis-  
position to make concessions as the price of tran-  
quillity, he did not choose to consider this repulse as  
decisive, but declared the consideration of the subject  
adjourned to the morrow.

But in the evening of this day another character  
appeared on the scene, who gave an unexpected turn  
to the proceedings. This was EDMUND MILLER, a  
lay-fellow, and Counsellor of the College, who was  
come according to custom to pass the Christmas vaca-  
tion among his brethren. He was a barrister of con-  
siderable reputation, possessed a great acquaintance  
with academical affairs, and was generally believed  
to be aiming at the representation of the University.  
The state in which he found the society on his arrival  
shall be described in his own words. “When he  
came to College it was easy to perceive in their coun-  
tenances how most of the Fellows were terrified, as  
well as dissatisfied, with what they thought was  
doing; they scarcely spoke to one another, but looked  
like so many prisoners, which were uncertain whether  
to expect military execution, or the favour of decima-  
tion<sup>6</sup>.” Miller at once declared his opinion that the  
Master’s proposals were unreasonable, and such as the  
Seniority neither could nor ought to sanction: and  
he appears first to have hinted that the violence with  
which they were beset might be resisted before some  
higher authority. The confidence reposed in this  
gentleman, from his familiarity with business and  
knowledge of the world, encouraged them to a still  
firmer resistance. Next morning one of the Seniors  
urged at the meeting that, as they were only trustees  
for the College, it was desirable to learn the opinions  
of the rest of the society, upon the disposal of so large

CHAP. IX.  
1709.  
Mr. Ed-  
mund Mil-  
ler.

<sup>6</sup> *Miller’s Remarks*, p. 85.



CHAP. IX. a portion of their revenues : he suggested accordingly  
 1709. that the Public-orator, Dr. Colbatch the Professor of Casuistry, and Mr. Miller, should be heard in the name of the other Fellows. The Master, having himself set the example of an appeal to the juniors, could not directly refuse this hearing : but, finding that Miller was likely to prove an obstacle to the scheme on which he had set his heart, he adopted a sudden and extraordinary measure in order to paralyze his opposition.

Lay Fel-  
lows.

The Master  
threatens  
Miller.

The statutes of Trinity College prescribe that all the Fellows shall be in holy orders within seven years after they are Masters of Arts, or if not, shall then leave the society ; except two, of whom one may study civil law, the other medicine ; and these two are to be nominated by the Master. As it had commonly happened, upon a vacancy of one of these lay-fellowships, that there was neither a civilian nor a physician among the Fellows, the Master had, in default of such, nominated barristers, or persons of no particular profession, according to his discretion : nor was this proceeding ever brought into question. It happened that Miller held the physic fellowship, to which he had been appointed by the late Master ; and Bentley chose to infer, from a sentence in the statutes, wherein the two laymen are incidentally termed *Juris Civilis et Medicinæ Professores*, that they ought to be *Doctors* of those faculties. Accordingly, when Miller was sent for to the meeting, he began by reading the words of those two statutes, and then asked him, ‘ whether or not he was Doctor of Physic.’ On his reply that ‘ there was no occasion for this question, since the Master knew what he was as well as he could inform him ;’ Bentley intimated, that, ‘ if he was not Doctor of Physic the following Lady-day, he would declare his fellowship void.’ This passed for an empty threat,



and Miller had presence of mind enough to perceive, how great an advantage the Master had given him in the eyes of the meeting. He merely answered that ‘this was not worth talking about, as he had been summoned to speak upon a different matter;’ and then proceeded, though not without interruption, to express his sentiments on the unfairness of the new projects, and the designs which he believed them to cover. Bentley was much exasperated at such bold and uncompromising conduct; he asserts that ‘Miller defied and threatened and reviled him with such opprobrious words and insolent behaviour, as he believed were never used by any Fellow to his Master to his face, and before such an audience, since the University had a being.’ The other denies his having ‘used insolent or opprobrious or even uncivil language;’ however this might be, the Doctor was so little used to the common freedom of opposition, that he was almost sure to be incensed at a fearless and open attack upon his favourite project.

Bentley determined however, after a few days, to make one more trial of his Seniority, and denounced to them his intention of bringing the matter before the Queen and Council, unless they agreed at once to his proposals; and, on their firm and unanimous refusal, he asked them, ‘whether they would be led by the nose by a lawyer;’ and said that ‘lawyers were the most ignominious people in the nation.’ Finally, on meeting with unlooked-for steadiness in persons whom he had held in contempt, he was betrayed into an excess of passion, of which we find no other instance in the course of his life. He said, that ‘he laid before them good and evil;’ bade them ‘choose between life and death;’ and, after calling some of the individuals by opprobrious names, he left them with this valedictory sentence: “From henceforward, farewell

Quarrels  
with the Se-  
niority.



CHAP. IX. peace to Trinity College." Immediately afterwards  
1709. he set off for London, with an intention, it was thought,  
 of effecting his purposes through the intervention of  
 powerful friends<sup>7</sup>.

Declaration  
 subscribed  
 against him.

As soon as he was gone, the Fellows, finding that  
 some appeal would forthwith be made to higher au-  
 thorities, and conceiving themselves to be the party  
 aggrieved, came to a resolution of having the first  
 word, and determined to prefer a complaint against  
 their Master: accordingly they consulted Mr. Miller  
 respecting the proper steps to be adopted. This was  
 the very point at which the latter was aiming, and in  
 which he would probably not have succeeded but for  
 the violence of the Doctor's behaviour at parting. As  
 a preliminary step he drew up the following paper, to  
 which the sixteen senior Fellows present in College,  
 as well as eight of the juniors, immediately subscribed  
 their names; at the same time entrusting the whole  
 business to his management and discretion:

Jan. 13,  
 1709-10.

"We whose names are here underwritten, all of us Fellows of  
 Trinity College in Cambridge, do disapprove of our now Master Dr.  
 Bentley's late project of altering the proportion of our dividends;  
 and of his excessive demands of a composition for the profits of his  
 mastership; and of the unworthy and unstatutable methods he made  
 use of in order to compass the same; and also of many other things  
 by him done, since he became our Master; all which, or so many of  
 them as can be recollected, and as counsel shall think fit, we desire in  
 behalf of ourselves, and the rest of the College, may be represented  
 to those who are the proper judges thereof, and in such manner as  
 counsel shall advise: humbly craving such determination and sen-  
 tence therein, as to the wisdom and justice of the said judges shall  
 seem meet."

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<sup>7</sup> *Miller's Remarks*, p. 12. It was either at this or the preceding meet-  
 ing that he told Mr. Cock, one of the Seniors, 'He would die in his  
 shoes:' another, Mr. Rashleigh, he called 'The College Dog.' The  
 character of the latter personage was indecorous, if not immoral; but I  
 have never discovered any thing recorded of Mr. Cock, which could give  
 occasion to such scurrility.



Dr. Colbatch, the individual most respected of the whole College for his learning and piety, objected to the violent expressions of this paper : and although he disapproved of the Master's late conduct, and joined in the wish that their disputes should be referred to proper judges, yet would not consent to push matters to extremity against him. He accordingly proposed to substitute a moderate and temperate declaration for the subscription of the Fellows, but found only one individual who concurred in this milder measure : in conclusion, he and his friend subscribed with the rest, specifying that their signatures extended only to a wish that the disputed points might be laid before a proper tribunal <sup>8</sup>.

CHAP. IX.  
1710.  
Dr. Colbatch.

No sooner was Bentley informed of this bold and unexpected step, than he hastened back from town, with the impatience of a general who hears of a mutiny among his troops during his absence, and resolves to arrest its progress by making a summary example of the ringleader. On the morning after his return he summoned a meeting of the Seniority, and declared that Mr. Miller's not having proceeded to the degree of Doctor of Physic was a statutable cause for pronouncing his fellowship void. All the Seniors ex-

Bentley declares Miller's fellowship vacant. Jan. 18.

<sup>8</sup> The following is the declaration proposed by Dr. Colbatch :

"Whereas some disputes have lately arisen, and do still continue, between Dr. Bentley, Master of Trinity College, and us, the Fellows of the same College, occasioned by a certain proposal made by him, the said Master, for altering the proportion of their dividends, and making a composition for himself for the profits of his mastership, in which proposal several particulars are contained, to which we cannot (as we conceive) by the statutes of our college agree ; we whose names are underwritten, the Vice-master, Senior Fellows, and other Fellows of the said College, do, for the restoring of peace and tranquillity to the Society, earnestly desire, in behalf of ourselves and the rest of the members of the College, that the aforesaid disputes may be referred to their cognizance and determination, who are the proper judges of it, and in such manner as counsel shall advise, humbly craving such sentence therein as to the wisdom and justice of such judges shall seem meet." *Rud's Diary.*



CHAP. IX.  
1710.

pressed their dissent from this doctrine ; whereupon he informed them that he neither asked nor needed their concurrence, but should act by virtue of his prerogative as executor of the statutes : and added, that he appointed Mr. Ashenhurst successor to the physical fellowship : he then sent for the butler, and ordered him, in the presence of the meeting, to cut out the name of Mr. Miller from the boards of the College ; at the same time entering, with his own hand, the following order in the Conclusion Book :

“ Jan. 18, 1709-10. Declared by the Master, that Mr. EDMUND MILLER having been nominated by the late Master to the Physic-fellowship, and having neither proceeded *Professor Medicinæ*, nor studied physic according to the 19th and 20th statutes, and still refusing to do so, has thereby forfeited his right to that nomination, and the said fellowship is become void.

“ Declared the same day by the Master, that Mr. ASHENHURST, Fellow of this College, student and practitioner in physic, is hereby nominated to the said Physic-fellowship, to hold and enjoy it ; upon condition that he proceed *Professor Medicinæ*, when he is of due standing by the statutes of the University.

RI. BENTLEY, *Magister Collegii.*”

The Seniors  
reinstate  
Miller.

The statutes direct that, in case of a dispute arising between the Master and any of the Fellows, it shall be laid before the Vice-master, who, with the assistance of the other Seniors, is to investigate and compose the difference. Mr. Miller made his appeal on this ground to Dr. Stubbe, the Vice-master, who immediately desired Dr. Bentley's attendance at a meeting to be held next morning in his chambers. This summons the Master considered an affront, and treated with neglect<sup>9</sup>. The Seniors assembled at the ap-

Jan. 19.

<sup>9</sup> This summons was not intended to be disrespectful ; but it must be allowed that, being addressed to a superior, it was couched in a rather dry and peremptory style :

“ Master,

Jan. 18, 1709.

“ I desire you to be present at my chambers to morrow morning at



pointed hour ; when the Master not appearing, they entered upon the merits of the question before them, and concluded with an unanimous resolution, to which the eight subscribed their names, that upon an examination of the rules and customs of the College, they dissented from the Master's interpretation of the sta-

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1710.

nine of the clock, concerning an appeal made to me and the rest of the seven Seniors this day by Mr. Miller, about your ordering his name to be taken off from the Buttery-board, and some other matters between you and Mr. Miller."

W. STUBBE, *Vicemaster*."

Upon this billet the Master remarks, in his printed *Letter to the Bishop of Ely*, p. 47.

" I make no doubt but your Lordship, who have once been Fellow of a College, will admire at such a new and unparallel'd thing, that a Master shou'd be summon'd from his own apartment (where the publick business is always transacted) to attend at a Vicemaster's chamber. And yet this was sent me at a time, when they knew I was indispos'd by a great cold, and confin'd at home. However, when they met there at nine the next day, without inquiring whether I design'd to come then, whether I desir'd another opportunity, or wish'd them to come to me ; under the conduct of Mr. Miller, they subscrib'd to this following order :"

" At the Vicemaster's Chamber in Trinity-College  
in Cambridge, Jan. 19, 1709.

" Upon complaint and appeal made unto us by Mr. Miller, according to the form of the College-Statute, concerning Dr. Bentley our now Master's yesterday ordering his name to be cut off from the Buttery-board without and contrary to the consent of any of the Senior Fellows then present, upon the Master's interpretation of the College-Statutes concerning the Physick-fellowship. We the Vicemaster and the rest of the seven Seniors now resident in College, upon consideration of the said statutes, and the usage which has always been in this and other Colleges in the University in the like case, do declare that we do not agree with the Master in his interpretation of the said statutes, and do therefore think fit that Mr. Miller's name be this day put again upon the Buttery-board.

" W. STUBBE, *Vicemaster*. EDW. BATHURST. J. COOHER.

P. COCK.

N. RASHLEIGH.

NATH. HANBURY."

G. MODD.

THO. SMITH.

The Doctor makes himself extremely merry at the wording of this order, which, having been transcribed by a lawyer's clerk, was not pointed; and pursues his cavils in a tone of drollery not suiting so serious an occasion.



CHAP. IX. tute, and therefore thought it right to replace Mr.  
1710. Miller's name upon the buttry-board.

The argu-  
ments for  
and against  
Bentley's  
act.

It is almost superfluous to discuss the legality of Bentley's proceeding, since it is clear from the time and circumstances that the act of expulsion was performed, not, as he alleged, in compliance with the oath and duty of a Master, but in punishment of the audacious attempt of which Miller had been the suggester. The Master defends his conduct with an elaborate and ingenious argument, at considerable length; but the whole chain of his reasoning is broken, if it be not conceded that *Professor Medicinæ* signifies, in the view of the statutes, *Doctor of Physic*: this point he endeavours to establish by a fallacious analogy. At Cambridge, as well as in other Universities, every Doctor of Divinity is termed *Sanctæ Theologiæ Professor*; but the title *Professor* is not technically applied to a Doctor in other faculties. There is no doubt but that the statutes designed this fellowship to be held by a physician; and that is a sufficient reason for conferring it on one who intends *bona fide* to study and practise medicine, in preference to other candidates: but it was unjust to deprive a person legally possessed of it, particularly after he had been made College Counsel by Dr. Bentley himself, with the concurrence of the Seniors, in 1701, at a time when, according to this new interpretation, he was liable to expulsion for not being Doctor of Physic. At all events the ground taken by the Master was novel and contrary to usage; and, consequently, could not be legally established but by an interpretation, in which the majority of the Seniors should concur with the Master<sup>10</sup>. It was preposterous to assert that his

<sup>10</sup> The five holders of this fellowship preceding Miller, were Clement Neville, Richard Duke the poet, Sir William Norres, Charles Montague,



own view of the subject was too plain and clear to admit of doubt, or require consultation; and the circumstance of the place, when vacant, being in the Master's appointment, was so far from giving him the sole power of vacating it, that it made his agency in the business a matter of greater delicacy, and more questionable propriety<sup>11</sup>. CHAP. IX.  
1710.

This act of severity had an effect widely different from what Bentley had expected. Instead of quelling further opposition by the influence of terror, it made the Fellows more determined in their resolution to dislodge a Master, who had so little difficulty in taking away a person's freehold by the decree of absolute authority. Such readiness had he shown to bend the statutes to his purpose, that no one could foresee how soon his own turn might come: *fruit intactis quoque cura Conditione super communi*. He had, moreover, supplied his prosecutors with a new and weighty article of charge against his administration. All thoughts of pacification being now given up, Miller set off for London to take measures for the prosecution; and the Master, having again cut out the reinstated name, followed to traverse and counter-act his operations. Jan. 20.  
Jan. 24.

A demur immediately arose among the lawyers who were consulted, respecting the true Visitor of Trinity College. The old statutes had indeed specified that the Bishop of Ely was General Visitor; but those of Queen Elizabeth did not contain this provision: it was therefore inferred by some that the visitatorial power rested with the Crown, as repre- Doubts as to  
the Visitor  
of Trinity.

(afterwards Earl of Halifax and First Lord of the Treasury,) and Dr. Charles Morley; of whom the last only was a physician.

<sup>11</sup> The reader may see, if he please, all that can be said on both sides of this question in Bentley's *Letter*, p. 31—50; Miller's *Remarks*, p. 82—114; and Blomer's *Full View*, p. 77—81.



CHAP. IX. 1710. sentative of the founder; and practice seemed to confirm this opinion. However, the 40th chapter of Queen Elizabeth's statutes, concerning the deprivation of a Master, declares that an appeal against him for crimes or malversation must be made to the Bishop of Ely, who is at the same time termed *Visitor*, in whom rested the power of judging the cause, and, if necessary, of removing him from the mastership. This statute is of so much importance in the progress of our history, that it will be convenient to give it to the reader at length.

CAP. XL. DE MAGISTRI, SI RES EXIGAT, AMOTIONE.

“ Quoniam Capite gravi aliquo morbo laborante, cætera Corporis membra vehementer quoque vexari solent; idcirco Statuimus et Ordinamus, ut si Magister Coll. in suo officio obeundo admodum negligens et dissolutus repertus fuerit, aut de inhonesta vitæ ratione aut incontinentia suspectus fuerit, per Vice-Magistrum et reliquos septem Seniores, aut per majorem partem eorum, quorum Conscientiam quantum possumus in hac re oneramus, sicut Domino Jesu rationem reddituri sunt, cum omni lenitate et modestia admoneatur: quod si hoc modo admonitus non se emendaverit, secundo similiter admoneatur: sin autem neque tum quidem resipuerit, Vice-Magister et reliqui Seniores, vel major pars eorum, rem omnem Visitatori Episcopo Eliensi, qui pro tempore fuerit, aperiant; qui et eam diligenter cognoscat, et cum æquitate definiat. Cujus Sententiæ Magistrum sine ulla appellatione omnino parere volumus, sub pœna loci sui in perpetuum amittendi.

“ Porro si dictus Magister coram dicto Visitatore aliquando examinatus, et vel de Hæreseos, vel Læsæ Majestatis crimine, vel de Simonia, Usura, Perjurio coram Judice commisso, Furto notabili, Homicidio voluntario, Incestu, Adulterio, Fornicatione, Dilapidatione bonorum Collegii vel de violatione Statutorum ejusdem, vel denique de alio quovis consimili crimine notabili coram prædicto Visitatore legitime convictus fuerit, sine mora per eundem Vice-Magistrum Officio Magistri privetur: neque ullam ei appellationem, aut ullum aliud juris remedium permittimus: sed cuncta quæ in hac causa tentaverit, irrita esse volumus et decernimus ipso facto.”

As it was intended to prosecute Dr. Bentley for



‘wasting the goods of the College, and violating its statutes,’ this enactment appeared completely to meet the case; and accordingly Miller, accompanied by Felton, one of the junior Fellows, carried the complaint to the Bishop of Ely. Dr. John Moore, who filled that see, had been an early friend and patron of Bentley, and was one of the six prelates whose recommendation advanced him to the mastership. His being Archdeacon of the diocese added another tie to the connection which literature had produced: the Bishop had, since his promotion to Ely, been a guest at Trinity Lodge, and advanced by his contributions the Master’s plans for the improvement of the College. Nevertheless, when called upon to become his judge, he made no scruple, except so far as to direct that the accusation should come in the form of a petition, addressed to himself by name as Visitor under the statutes. Accordingly the following Petition was drawn up by Miller, and subscribed by a still greater number of names than the former Declaration:

CHAP. IX.  
1710.

Dr. J.  
Moore, Bi-  
shop of Ely.

“ *To the Right Reverend Father in God, JOHN Lord Bishop of Ely, Visitor of Trinity College, in Cambridg, upon the Fortieth Chapter of the College Statutes, entitled De Magistri (si res exigat) amotione, The Humble Petition and Complaint of the Vice-Master, Senior Fellows, and many of the Doctors in Divinity, and Masters of Arts, Fellows and Members of the College of the Holy and undivided Trinity, in the University of Cambridg, of King Henry the Eighth’s foundation, in behalf of themselves and the rest of the Members of the said College, against Richard Bentley, Doctor in Divinity, now Master thereof,*

Petition of  
the Fellows.

“ Shew,

“ That the Fellows and all the members of the said College having for many years lived with a great respect and love to their former Masters, and in a perfect amity one with another, In the year of our Lord God 1700, when the said Dr. Bentley first came to be their Master, the peace of the said College was soon disturbed, by his demanding and taking of the said College several unusual and great



CHAP. IX. sums of money, which he applied to his own use: And almost every  
 1710. year since by his continual making new demands of profits and per-  
 quisites for himself; and by his taking and threatening to take away, sometimes with the forced consent of the governing part of the College, and sometimes without any consent at all, several known privileges and perquisites from the rest of the College in general, and even fellowships and scholarships from several in particular; and by his threatening and assuming to inflict several unstatutable and (before his time) unheard-of punishments upon several of the Fellows, for no other reason but because he heard they talked against his proceedings: And by his using violent and unworthy methods, whereby he has prevailed with some few of the College to espouse his separate interest, the peace of this Royal and ample foundation has not only for many years been wholly broken, but the statutes have been violated, and the goods of the College wasted, and many of the Fellows reduced to great necessity by his lessening the value of their fellowships, which were before but very small. Nevertheless, the Fellows and Members of the said College, out of a peaceable disposition, and being persuaded by the said Dr. Bentley's fair promises, which he constantly made upon his gaining every new advantage, that they should enjoy peace and quietness for the future, and out of respect to those that made him their Master, though they could not be wholly silent, they were unwilling publicly to complain to their superiours; till now again this last year the said Dr. Bentley not only making another exorbitant demand of profits to himself, but in order thereunto, endeavouring to make an alteration almost throughout the whole College in their dividends and dues, whereby they are maintained, and which they and their predecessors have for many years enjoyed, and that in a partial manner, and by such methods as are before mentioned; We are necessitated at this time to petition and complain to your Lordship, promising within a convenient time to lay before you, in such method as you shall appoint, the several particulars, wherein the truth of what is here alledged will manifestly appear: Humbly craving, in due time, such sentence as to your Lordship's wisdom and justice shall seem meet."

Feb. 6, 1709.

WOLFRAN STUBBE, D.D. *and Vice-* JOHN COOPER, B.D.

*Master.*

NAT. HANBURY, B.D.

P. COCK, *Sen. Fellow.*

JOHN LAUGHTON, *by his consent by letter.*

GEO. MODD, *Sen. Fellow.*

STEPHEN CRESSAR, D.D.

EDW. BATHURST, *Sen. Fel.*

ABRA. JORDAN, M.A.

NAT. RASHLEIGH, *Sen. Fel.*

WILLIAM DRURY, M.A.

THOS. SMITH, D.D. *Sen. Fel.*

MAT.



|                                           |                                           |           |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------|
| MAT. BARWELL, M.A.                        | <i>the same that is mentioned by Dr.</i>  | CHAP. IX. |
| JOHN COLBATCH, D.D. “ <i>I desire</i>     | <i>Colbatch.</i> ”                        | 1710.     |
| <i>that all matters mentioned in this</i> | GRIFFITH WILLIAMS, B.D. “ <i>I de-</i>    |           |
| <i>petition may be referred to the</i>    | <i>sire the same that is mentioned by</i> |           |
| <i>cognizance and determination of</i>    | <i>Dr. Colbatch.</i> ”                    |           |
| <i>my Lord the Bishop of Ely.</i> ”       | SAMUEL WHITE, M.A.                        |           |
| WILLIAM AYLOFF, L.L.D.                    | WILL. CHAMBERLAIN, M.A.                   |           |
| EDMUND MILLER, M.A.                       | JO. CRAISTER, M.A.                        |           |
| JA. BRABOURN, B.D.                        | EDM. STUBBE, M.A.                         |           |
| L. BRODRICK, D.D.                         | JO. PARIS, M.A.                           |           |
| RALPH WELSTEAD, M.A.                      | THO. BLOMER, M.A.                         |           |
| RI. STOKES, M.A. <i>gave his consent</i>  | CONYERS MIDDLETON, M.A.                   |           |
| <i>by letter.</i>                         | JOHN FELTON, M.A.                         |           |
| WILLIAM WADE, M.A. “ <i>I desire</i>      |                                           |           |

Of the thirty names attached to this complaint, only the last eight were Fellows elected within the period of Bentley's mastership: of the rest of the juniors, some were attached to him by past obligations, others were so dependent upon his favour for their pupils, that they were neither requested nor wished to join in the accusation. However, there is found among the complainants the well-known name of Conyers Middleton. Being at that time a young man, he did not take a prominent part in the proceedings; and his fellowship became vacant a few months afterwards by his marriage. But the feelings of hostility to the Master originated by these disputes sank deep into his mind, and made him subsequently the most determined and dangerous of his adversaries.

The Bishop of Ely having received the Petition by the hands of Miller, forthwith transmitted a copy of it to the party accused; whereupon Dr. Bentley determined to bring the affairs of his College before the public, and to become in his turn the accuser of those who had presumed to arraign his conduct and seek his deposition. This measure, the policy and decorum of which were very questionable, was put into immediate execution. His statement of the case

Conyers  
Middleton.

Feb. 10,  
1709-10.



## CHAP. IX.

1710.

Bentley  
prints a  
letter to the  
Bishop of  
Ely.

Attacks his  
prosecutors.

appeared in the shape of a 'Letter to the Bishop,' containing unmeasured invectives against the subscribers, and asserting that the only real offence which he had given was his successful endeavour to restore discipline, study, and good morals in Trinity College. He anticipates almost all the particular charges to be brought against him, and invariably takes credit to himself for his behaviour in those very instances.

The characters of the subscribers he treats with unbounded contumely, representing them as a debauched and profligate crew, destitute of learning, industry, and principle; and the complaint itself he terms 'the last struggle and effort of vice and idleness against virtue, learning, and good discipline.' This language was every way unjustifiable, being grounded upon the fact of the disreputable lives of two or three among the thirty complainants; while the rest were persons to whom no reproach whatever could be attached, and some of them, as Dr. Stubbe, Dr. Smith, Dr. Cressar, Dr. Ayloffe, Dr. Colbatch, and Mr. Wade, ranked high among the most respectable characters in the University. The publication of such abuse and scandal was not only indecorous and unsuitable to a dignified divine, but plainly appeared the effect of resentment, and, as such, was ill calculated to establish an opinion of his own innocence.

Criticizes  
the petition.

A considerable part of Bentley's pamphlet is occupied with cavils and exceptions against the form and language of the Petition, which, even if well-founded, could not affect the merits of any question at issue; that document being only preparatory to a formal and judicial proceeding, when the articles of accusation were to be definitely drawn up and substantiated by evidence. Thus he urges that Edmund Miller, having been ejected from his fellowship, had no right to



present or to subscribe the Petition; that the signatures of all the Fellows above the number of the eight Seniors, ‘ which, with ostentation, *ad augendam invidiam*, are added to it, are so far from giving more force and weight, that they invalidate and void it.’ He contends that by the words of the statute he ought to have been twice admonished by the Vice-master and Seniors, before a complaint was made to the Visitor; a form which, as the other party maintained, was required only in the first part of the enactment, and not in case of ‘ wasting the goods of the College, or violating the statutes.’

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1710.

One topic insinuated in his pamphlet was afterwards turned against himself with great effect: several of the Fellows were of Tory principles, which at that time predominated in the University. Among them the politics of the Master did not serve to render him more popular. ‘ If,’ says he, ‘ in this age of parties and divisions, some few dislike me on that account, ’tis impossible to help it: excepting these, I do not want the good word and love of any, but of such wretches, whose commendations would be more scandalous than their railings: for no one can have favour of these, if he is not like them in his vices <sup>12</sup>.’

 Politics of  
the Fellows.

To another cause of his want of popularity, the contrast between himself and his predecessor, Dr. Montague, he alludes in the most offensive and scurrilous terms: “ Had I been of their party, had I herded and sotted with them, had I suffered them to play their cheats in their several offices; I might have done what I would, I might have devoured and destroyed the College, and yet come away with their applauses for a great and good Master <sup>13</sup>.”

 Allusions to  
the late  
Master.

He treats his adversaries with similar insult when

 Distress of  
the peti-  
tioners.

<sup>12</sup> Bentley's Letter to the Bishop of Ely, p. 12.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. p. 64.



CHAP. IX. speaking of that part of their complaint, which men-  
1710. tions that some of them are reduced to great necessity:

“ But yet, my Lord, I own one truth that Mr. Miller has said here, and it's the only one in the whole Petition, that some of the Fellows (every one of them his subscribers) ‘ are reduced to great necessity.’ But what, I pray, is the true reason of it? Not the ‘ diminishing of their fellowships,’ as our oracle avers; that is refuted above, to a demonstration. ’Tis not the ‘ lessening’ of those, but the increasing of something else: I mean *the price of claret*. For the advance of twelve-pence in a bottle repeated every day, must needs now exhaust a scanty fellowship ‘ which was before but very small.’ This is the grand article in their expenses, far above all other charges, of clothes, or (what are now forgot by them) books: for I dare pass my word, among all their debts and ticks there are none to the stationers.” *Letter*, p. 62.

Defence of  
 his conduct.

The general topics urged by him in defence of his conduct have been already noticed in our history of his College administration. The pervading charge, that he acted arbitrarily and without the concurrence of his statutable advisers, he in some cases denies, but more frequently avows and justifies; contending that the statutes do not require their assent in all particulars: he admits, indeed, that custom was against him, but maintains that it was ‘ not custom but statute which he was sworn to observe,’ and that no good measure could ever have been effected without the exertion of such magisterial and decisive authority. Of his scheme for ‘ dividends according to degrees’ he makes a clear and powerful defence; and, as his conduct respecting this matter was confessedly the immediate cause of the prosecution, without which the other complaints would not have come before a Visitor, he turns this topic greatly to his advantage. As for the charge of excessive expenses in his own house, he founds upon it an ingenious argument against the Fellows, who had refused his



proposition for taking away such grounds of complaint for the future by an equitable and honourable composition. CHAP. IX.  
1710.

Upon the whole, however, the reader who is acquainted with Dr. Bentley from his other works, will be surprised and disappointed by the perusal of his 'Letter to the Bishop of Ely,' and will scarcely believe him to be the same writer who ten years before triumphed over the combined wits of Christ-Church. Notwithstanding the powerful and pointed sentences, the severe invective, and caustic ridicule interspersed in this piece, its general effect is such as to raise a prejudice against the author. The tone is not that of an innocent person, who feels unjustly criminated, but of a daring adversary, more intent upon carrying war into the enemy's quarters than upon defending himself. The perpetual criticism of the words of the Petition is captious and misplaced, suiting neither the dignity of the writer, nor that of the personage to whom the epistle is addressed. In regard to his attack upon the prosecutors, it is even now disgusting to see such invectives against persons, whose station demanded the character of wisdom, gravity, and piety. Whatever might be the foundation of the scandal in particular cases, no provocation or resentment could justify his injuring the credit and interests of his society by publicly vilifying its governors.

To avoid the indecorum of putting forth this pamphlet in Bentley's own name, it was said in the title-page to be 'published for general information by a gentleman of the Temple.' Prefixed to the book is an address from the publisher to the reader, where it is asserted that the Letter is printed from a copy given by the Master to a person of honour, which he 'accidentally met with,' and published 'because he thought it would be an inexcusable fault to conceal it.' The

Character  
of Bentley's  
pamphlet.

Pretended  
publisher.



CHAP. IX. disguise however was so thin, that no one hesitated to  
1710. consider the 'Gentleman of the Temple' a fictitious character, and to attribute the publication to Bentley himself. This preface is drawn up in worse taste, and exposed him to more ridicule, than almost any other of his productions; particularly by a long enumeration of the scholars who had given to the world their high opinions of Dr. Bentley, from Spanheim and Grævius down to Needham and Davies.

Replies to  
 Bentley's  
 Letter.

This publication immediately produced a host of replies from members of the College, who rebutted with exasperated feelings the accusations of their Master. Six or seven pamphlets appeared in rapid succession, two only bearing the names of their authors, Edmund Miller, and Thomas Blomer; the others were believed to be written by junior members of the society, who, having subscribed the Petition, were indignant at a publication which censured 'the scandalous lives, insufficient learning, and seditious practices of most of the gang.' In all of them the Master's 'Letter to the Bishop of Ely' is taken to pieces and treated with unceremonious and unsparing examination. The deference claimed by his station and talents being banished by a recollection of the language of his own pamphlet, every defect in his character or administration is exhibited in a glaring and exaggerated light, and his whole conduct is charged as tyrannical, rapacious, treacherous, and unfeeling; while his designs are represented as still blacker and more odious. One of the accusations brought by Dr. Bentley against the petitioners, that of dulness, was refuted at once by the answers which his 'Letter' called forth: we find in them a great deal of scholarlike writing, mixed with no common powers of witty and caustic raillery. The quaint and obsolete expressions which occur in all the Doctor's



writings, and the occasional ruggedness of a style CHAP. IX.  
 which he allowed himself no time to polish, afforded 1710.  
 an unfailing topic of ridicule to the young scholars by  
 whom he was assailed. Miller examined every sen- Miller.  
 tence of his 'Letter' with industry and care; and,  
 having access to the different College books, he en-  
 countered in detail his assertions respecting statutes,  
 precedents, and accounts, with much accuracy. Being  
 perfectly master of the subjects in dispute, and relying  
 upon facts and arguments, he was the most formidable  
 of Bentley's adversaries. That Miller was in reality  
 a turbulent and factious man there is every reason to  
 believe, and he probably rejoiced at being appointed  
 to conduct the prosecution: but the violence of the  
 Master's behaviour and language had given him an  
 advantage in the appeal now made to the public,  
 which he did not fail to improve. Blomer's 'Full Blomer.  
 View of Dr. Bentley's Letter' is a piece of great and  
 well sustained humour: with all the exuberances of  
 juvenile wit unchecked by any forbearance, it has the  
 effect of holding up the Doctor's performance, as well  
 as his character, in a ridiculous light; and it is pro-  
 bable that all the witty attacks of Swift, Arbuthnot,  
 and Pope, never occasioned him so much annoyance  
 as he must have felt at the perusal of this effusion <sup>14</sup>.

The other pamphlets written in reply to Bentley  
 were anonymous: but it was understood at the time  
 that one called the 'True State of Trinity College'  
 was the joint production of White and Paris, two White.

<sup>14</sup> The title is, "*A Full View of Dr. Bentley's Letter to the Lord Bishop of Ely, in a Discourse to a Friend, wherein the whole strain of that celebrated piece throughout is fairly, familiarly, and largely considered.*" By THO. BLOMER, M.A. Fellow of Trinity College, in Cambridge. London, 1710. The four mottos of this pamphlet are—*Quid me alta silentia cogis Rumpere, et obductum verbis vulgare dolorem.*—*Longa est injuria, longæ Ambages, sed summa sequar fastigia rerum*—*Nec servire ulli possumus, nec imperare desideramus.*—*Decimo demum pugnavimus anno.*



CHAP. IX. junior Fellows among the petitioners : and that ‘ A  
 1710. True and Impartial Account of the Differences between

Paris.

1711, was written by Paris, who had in the mean time experienced the especial resentment of the Master, by whom he had been deprived of a pupil. The reason alleged for this act of rigour was, that ‘ he had countenanced and encouraged the young man in dissipation :’ a charge which was denied at the time, and which his respectable character in after life makes us unwilling to believe. These pieces are keen and witty *jeu d’esprits*, attacking the Doctor’s conduct with invective and his defence with ridicule. Two other anonymous publications, arising from Bentley’s ‘ Letter’ and the College feud, were attributed to Partridge, a scholar of Trinity, and are to be noticed as testifying the effect produced upon the minds of the young men by the disputes of their governors : all wholesome respect to character and authority was destroyed, and the bands of discipline appeared to be dissolved<sup>15</sup>.

Partridge.

Ashenhurst.

In all these publications we find Bentley’s friend Ashenhurst treated with extreme severity. Not only the prominent character which he sustained in the quarrel as the Master’s active minister, but the belief

<sup>15</sup> The title of the first of these pamphlets is, *Some Considerations humbly offered to John, Lord Bishop of Ely, on the book entitled ‘ The Present State of Trinity College, in Cambridge, by Dr. Bentley.’ By a Master of Arts and Fellow of the said College, 1710.* The same writer published a second Letter to the Bishop of Ely, dated June 21, 1710, called *The Rights of the Scholars of Trinity College Asserted*. It appears clear from p. 67 of this pamphlet, that, notwithstanding his assumed title, the author was really an undergraduate. In attributing them to Partridge, I follow the authority of Dr. Rud, the author of the MS. Diary to which I frequently refer. He was one of the tutors, and has noted the names of the supposed writers in his collection of these various tracts, now in Trinity library.

The only piece of information to be gathered from the last pamphlet is, that the price of an undergraduate’s gown in the year 1710 was four pounds.



that he was a tale-bearer and traducer of his brethren, marked him out as the object of odium and resentment<sup>16</sup>. And this he was soon in danger of experiencing to his cost ; for having in conversation upon the politics of the day unguardedly said to Mr. Craister, a brother Fellow, that ‘ the Queen was a superstitious canting woman,’ it was suggested that these words amounted to the crime ‘ *læsæ majestatis*,’ and were, as such, punishable by expulsion from his fellowship : whereupon an official application was made by the Vice-master to Dr. Bentley, calling upon him to convene the party accused before the Seniority, and to hear evidence upon the complaint. The Master, being aware that the real cause of the accusation was Ashenhurst’s devotion to his interests, would not listen to the representation ; and by this refusal incurred fresh outcry, as acting inconsistently with his former conduct, when he had joined the other Heads in punishing Dr. Tudway, the Professor of Music, for uttering words disrespectful to her Majesty<sup>17</sup>. But the loyalty of Dr. Stubbe would not suffer him to rest :

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1710.

<sup>16</sup> See *The True State of Trinity College*, p. 66-68. *Some Considerations*, p. 23. *A True and Impartial Account*, p. 26. Thirlby, in *The University of Cambridge Vindicated*, p. 12, describes Ashenhurst as ‘ the greatest plague and nuisance of the University :’ *monstrum nulla virtute redemptum A vitiis* : and says, ‘ that he insinuated himself into the acquaintance of all youth of rank and fortune, in order to debauch their principles.’

<sup>17</sup> The crime of Tudway was a bad pun reflecting on the Queen, or rather on the ministry. He said in company, that though her Majesty had refused the address of the Hertford burgesses, yet had it been from Daniel Burgess (the celebrated dissenter) it would have been received. For this he was convicted, on the 20th of July 1706, before Dr. Fisher the Vice-Chancellor and eight other Heads at Sidney Lodge, of ‘ having uttered words highly reflecting on the Queen and her administration,’ and sentenced to be suspended *ab omni gradu suscepto et suscipiendo*, and to be deprived of his organist’s place at St. Mary’s and his professorship in the University. The execution of this sentence was published by the Vice-Chancellor at a Convocation on August 20 : on the 10th of March following, Tudway, having first subscribed a most humble and penitential apology, was released from his suspension.



CHAP. IX. he wrote two letters to the Vice-Chancellor, calling  
 1710. upon him to investigate the affair according to the  
 statutes of the University. That officer, overcome by  
 his importunities, cited the accused party before the  
 Heads, and proceeded to a regular trial of the offence.  
 Craister deposed that, being in company with Ashen-  
 hurst at the Cock tavern in Westminster in the month  
 of February, the latter observed that ‘Mr. Harley  
 went still to court, and had the Queen’s ear; that he  
 knew how to please and tickle the Queen; for, said  
 Ashenhurst, the Queen is a superstitious canting  
 woman.’ A few days afterwards another court was  
 held, when the culprit made his defence, a copy of  
 which is preserved, along with other particulars of this  
 cause, in the archives of the University. It is a  
 masterly piece, bearing internal evidence of the hand  
 of Dr. Bentley, and displaying that legal acuteness  
 which was subsequently so conspicuous in causes  
 where he was himself engaged. It demonstrates that  
 this paltry proceeding originated in the College dis-  
 putes, and the part which Ashenhurst had taken in  
 favour of the Master. After all, no judgment was  
 pronounced: either the prosecutors were ashamed to  
 press the case further; or it was found that the want  
 of two witnesses to the fact prevented their obtaining  
 a conviction in this court, where the civil law pre-  
 vailed<sup>18</sup>.

Public opi-  
 nions on  
 these  
 quarrels.

The whole of these extraordinary disputes occa-  
 sioned in the public mind great surprise and sensa-  
 tion. Curiosity was excited and kept alive by the  
 details of a feud, which involved the credit of one of  
 the first literary characters, and one of the first societies  
 in the world. But all friends of the University were

<sup>18</sup> It was attempted to remedy this deficiency by the testimony of a  
 worthless pupil, who had once heard Mr. Ashenhurst speak of the Queen  
 as ‘a weak, silly woman.’



shocked at a proceeding which, whatever might be its result, brought disgrace upon the academical character; and churchmen were afflicted to behold a learned divine engaged with his Fellows in an unseemly contest of mutual invective. A correspondence, given in the note, between Dr. Atterbury, then Dean of Carlisle, and Dr. Colbatch, may serve as a specimen of the feeling which we are told was generally produced by this controversy<sup>19</sup>.

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1710.

<sup>19</sup> “ Reverend Sir,

*Chelsea, May 27, 1710.*

“ I was at Oxford when your letter came. I hope the person at London, you directed to search the Paper-Office, has found the piece I directed you to: and that it is to your purpose. You may depend upon it, 'tis there; though the officer (Mr. Delafay) may happen in his first search to overlook it. I am heartily troubled at the imprudent and unchristian steps taken towards calling in the world to judge of the differences in your College, and the occasions of them; which ought to have been lodged with the Visitor only, and there for ever buried—as it is plain that you, Sir, from the manner of your subscription, thought from the beginning; and it is extremely to be lamented that so contrary a course should be taken. Could I contribute any thing towards preventing the mischief which this unhappy dispute may bring upon the College, you may depend upon my best services, if I can afford them with that secrecy, which in such an affair as this I desire carefully to observe. For it becomes not me to intermeddle in such affairs, nor would I upon any account in the world be known to do it. I doubt not your being just to me in that particular, and I am with much esteem and truth,

Reverend Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

“ *To the Rev. Dr. Colbatch.*”

FR. ATTERBURY.”

“ Reverend Sir,

*Trinity College, June 6, 1710.*

“ I beg your pardon for not sooner answering the last letter I had the honour to receive from you. The reason of this delay was my expecting an account of the MS. from Mr. Miller, at least in the book he hath now published; he having had timely notice sent him, and promised that the Paper-Office should be searched for it. But whether or no he hath done what he promised, I cannot yet learn; I am sure he hath made no use of the MS. in his book, but given sufficient cause to fear that this quarrel of ours will be carried on further still, with the same spirit and in the same manner as it was begun; there being an inexhaustible magazine of scandal on both sides, which both parties seem resolved to make the most of, without considering the advantage they are giving to the common enemy; so that, should the Royal Visitation, which seems now unavoid-



## CHAP. IX.

1710.

Dr. King's  
Horace in  
Trinity Col-  
lege.

Another of Bentley's old adversaries, Dr. King, had feelings of a different kind on this occasion. He had smarted severely under the castigation which he received for interfering in the Phalaris controversy, and had continued to discharge his spleen in the 'Dialogues of the Dead' as long as he could interest readers with that topic. After ten years' interval, he was overjoyed to find that he could assail his old enemy in a more vulnerable point than that of criticism. The publication of Miller's 'Remarks' put him in possession of the details of bread, beer, and fuel consumed in Bentley's lodge. On this foundation King built a piece of humour, entitled 'Horace in Trinity College.' It was printed in what he called his 'Useful Miscellanies:' the fiction supposes Horace, in fulfil-

able, and is, indeed, the only means of reducing us into order, be managed by men of the same stamp with those that were so shamefully baffled in a late attempt, possibly they may find a way to retrieve a lost game. I can hardly doubt but that the first design of printing was to give them an occasion to follow the blow. The only hope left us is, that the power is now falling into better hands, in which case I doubt not but we shall find the effects of your great kindness to our society, and zeal for the public good. I am with all possible respect,

Reverend Sir,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

"To Dr. Atterbury, &c."

J. COLBATCH."

"Reverend Sir,

July 15, 1710.

"I readily agree with you as to the consequence of this quarrel and the dirty way of managing it, which both sides, I find, equally fall into. I am sorry to see such hints as are scattered in Mr. Miller's book, about the exorbitant stipends of the several Masters of Colleges, and the too great number of Fellows obliged to take Orders: their informations look further than your own College, and seem to call for a General Visitation, or an Act of Parliament to set right these disorders. There are those who will be ready to improve this quarrel, till it grows ripe for such an interposition. Whatever happens, you may depend upon all the little services I am able to do, either to the body in general, or to you, Sir, in particular: for I am, with a sincere respect,

Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,

"To the Reverend Dr. Colbatch,

FR. ATTERBURY."

*Casuistical Professor and Fellow of Trinity College, in Cambridge.*"



ment of his well-known prophecy, *Visam Britannos hospitibus feros*, to visit Britain and take up his abode in the Master's lodge of Trinity College, where he gets immensely fat (*Epicuri de grege porcus*) by the good cheer maintained at the expense of the society. This banter is interlarded partly with quotations from Horace's works, and partly with Miller's extracts from the College account books. Perhaps the most laughable matter in the piece is the representation of a medal, bearing on one side a figure of Horace, with a cup of audit ale in one hand, some college rolls in the other, and an immeasurable rotundity of person; and on the reverse *E Promptuar. Col. Trin. Cant*<sup>20</sup>.

Shortly after the publication of his 'Letter,' Dr. Bentley held a conversation with the Bishop of Ely, and learnt, much to his dissatisfaction, that his Lordship was not convinced by his arguments of the informality of the Fellows' proceedings, but thought that the provisions of the statute had been sufficiently complied with. He immediately addressed another letter to the prelate, repeating and urging his exceptions against the form and signatures of the Petition. This shall be preserved in a note, as a specimen of the ingenuity and subtilty exhibited by our critic, for the first time, in a legal argument; this instance is the more remarkable, as the point which he laboured to maintain appears to a common apprehension perfectly untenable<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> In the edition of King's works, 1776, this piece is found in vol. iii. p. 24, entitled 'Some Account of Horace's Behaviour during his Stay at Trinity College, Cambridge; with an Ode to entreat his departure thence. Together with a Copy of his Medal taken out of Trinity College Buttery. By a well-wisher to that Society.'

<sup>21</sup> To the Right Reverend Father in God, John, Lord Bishop of Ely.

"My Lord,

"In the conversation your Lordship honoured me with yesterday evening, I perceive your Lordship inclined to that opinion, that in the 40th of our College statutes, the clause beginning with *Porro* is wholly to

Bentley again writes to the Bishop of Ely.



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During the progress of this feud, Bentley could so far abstract his mind from a business which vitally

be separated from the preceding, and gives room for any accusers of the Master above the eight Seniors mention'd in the clauses before. Now I humbly conceive that that opinion is clearly refuted from the statute itself, upon these following considerations :

“ 1. In the prior clauses, the Seniors not till after two admonitions can accuse the Master to the Visitor, *si in suo officio obeundo admodum negligens aut dissolutus repertus fuerit, aut de inhonesta vitæ ratione aut incontinentia suspectus*. In the latter clause the same crimes, before mentioned in general terms, are expressed in particular. The *negligens et dissolutus in officio* is specified by *Dilapidatio Bonorum Collegii et violatio Statutorum ejusdem* : those being the main branches of his office *quatenus* Master, as appears by his oath in the said statutes. Again, the *Inhonesta vitæ Ratio* and *Incontinentia* are particularised in those special crimes, *Hæreseos vel læsæ Majestatis Crimine, Simonia, Usura, Perjurio coram judice commisso, Furto notabili, Homicidio voluntario, Incestu, Adulterio, Fornicatione*. Now, my Lord, if the last clause allow'd of all accusers whatsoever, the Seniors would be under more difficulties than any other persons ; which is absurd ; for they, for the same crimes, cannot accuse till after two admonitions, which any others may do without that previous condition : or if the Seniors too are allowed by the last clause to accuse at large, the prior clauses will be found wholly useless and impertinent.

“ 2. Again, my Lord, the words of the latter clause being only these, *Examinatus et legitime convictus*, 'tis plain that examination and conviction supposes the accusers mention'd before, and no other ; for otherwise it would have been added, *a quocunque accusatus* ; but at present, there being no word at all of accusation, this clause must necessarily relate to the accusers named before, or else the Visitor himself might examine the Master without any accuser ; which is absurd and unreasonable.

“ 3. Again, my Lord, if the latter clause be totally disjoin'd from the former, any person, though no member of the Society, may summon the Master before the Visitor ; a thing unheard of in any College in England ; and I may add, my Lord, that in King Edward's statute (the same number, 40) about the expulsion of the Master, the Seniors alone are appointed accusers, and no other : neither is there any thing there ambiguous, or in the least capable of another interpretation.

“ Upon all which, my Lord, I humbly crave leave to insist and protest again (for fear of bringing so dangerous a precedent upon my successors) that all the present proceedings, and what shall follow on the same foot, are null and void *ipso facto* : and I admit them, or give answers to them, only to clear myself in your Lordship's opinion and the world's, without any acknowledgment of this proceeding as judicial or legitimate,

“ I am, with all humility and sincerity,

“ Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

“ R<sup>*i*</sup>. BENTLEY.”

“ At her Majesty's Library, March 25, 1710.”



affected all his worldly interests, as to compose one of the ablest and most perfect of his works, 'The Emendations of Menander and Philemon.' The celebrated John Le Clerc was now in the full career of literary ambition: in his countless publications he not only appeared as a theologian, philosopher, scholar, and critic, but pretended to the foremost rank in all those different departments. He seems to have been the first person who understood the power which may be exercised over literature by a reviewer. He had formerly been the principal writer of the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, and for two or three years past had published the *Bibliothèque Choisie*, a quarterly journal, which examined most new publications. Such an adept was he in the science of reviewing, so skilfully did he distribute his praises and censures, and so well did he understand the artifice of interposing his own judgment on some of the leading subjects, that he maintained an air of superiority upon every topic, and by an absolute system of terror, made himself a despot in the republic of letters. Being a man of great capacity and surprising exertion, he executed many voluminous works of dissimilar natures. He was at this time regarded as the leader of the Arminian divines in Holland; he was likewise eminent in natural and moral philosophy; he had left scarcely any department of modern literature untouched; but all would not satisfy him, unless he could also establish a reputation for classical scholarship. Unfortunately, he had been ill-grounded in the Greek language, was imperfectly acquainted with the elements of its grammar, and had acquired the little knowledge which he possessed at an advanced age, with the view, as it would appear, of becoming in every respect a parallel to the incomparable Grotius. In an evil hour he undertook an edition of the Fragments of the comic

CHAP. IX.  
 1710.

John Le  
 Clerc.

His skill as  
 a reviewer.

Is anxious  
 for reputa-  
 tion in scho-  
 larship.

Publishes  
 the frag-  
 ments of  
 Menander  
 and Phile-  
 mon.



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1710.

poets, Menander and Philemon; a work requiring not only an extensive familiarity with classical authors, but peculiar judgment and tact, and, above all, an accurate acquaintance with the comic metres. In all these respects, Le Clerc was deficient: in the last particular he had not the information which might have been derived from the poorest grammar-school in Europe: the total extent of his metrical theory seems to have been that an iambic verse ought to consist of twelve syllables; but of the difference between a spondee, iambus, and trochee, he had no very distinct notion, and appears never to have troubled himself with such inquiries. How he could have ventured upon this undertaking, conscious as he must have been of his own unfitness, and aware of the danger of exposure, is perfectly amazing: there seems hardly any way of accounting for such unexampled presumption, unless we suppose that he had got into his possession the manuscripts of some deceased scholar, who had begun an arrangement of these Fragments, upon the accuracy of which he placed undue reliance<sup>22</sup>.

Grotius having employed himself on his Stobæus, as well as his *Excerpta* from the Greek Dramatists, to beguile the hours of imprisonment in the castle of Louvestein, Le Clerc determined to reap glory in the same field. His own account of the undertaking, that he had always felt great delight in these remnants of

<sup>22</sup> This was the conjecture of his enemy Peter Burman: "Suspicio præterea non vana mihi, dum excutio hæc fragmenta, nata fuit, in manus hujusce vulturii incidisse quasdam schedas viri alicujus doctissimi, qui ante nostrum his fragmentis jam colligendis operam dedit. Dubitaveram etiam vehementer, an non cum eo communicata fuerint horum Comicorum fragmenta olim a Theodoro Cantero collecta, qui ingens patriæ meæ lumen et decus fuit, et quæ olim Cl. Francius possedit, nunc vero auctione publica ejus libris divenditis in Amstelædamensis cujusdam incolæ manus pervenerunt." *Burmanni Præfatio*.



Greek comedy, and had collected and transcribed them for his own convenience and amusement, is unquestionably fictitious ; since his knowledge of the language was never sufficient to enable him to derive the least pleasure from their perusal. The collection consists of fragments copied from the two volumes of Grotius just mentioned, and those pointed out in the indexes of Meursius and Fabricius ; to the latter of whom he omits to mention his obligations. It seems hard to pronounce of any book, drawn up by a man of learning, that it contains nothing new which is useful or instructive ; but Le Clerc's compilation deserves this and even severer censures. Instead of improving the collections of Grotius, he either implicitly follows him, or in deserting him seldom fails to commit some enormous error. He undertakes to give the notes of his great predecessor entire ; but, in violation of this promise, the reader finds them mutilated. He prints the words of the poets mixed up with those of the prose writers by whom they are quoted, and arranges the whole in lines of twelve syllables, intended to look like iambic verses. Many of the fragments he alters, by the insertion, omission, or substitution of words, without apprising the reader of the change ; and thereby does all in his power to prevent the true reading from being discovered. In short, he accumulates every fault which a person destitute of all qualifications for his task can be imagined to commit. This work, the demerits of which have never been paralleled, is dedicated to the Earl of Shaftesbury, author of the 'Characteristics,' who had formed an acquaintance with Le Clerc and was an admirer of his latitudinarian principles. It was published in the latter part of 1709 ; and Bentley, immediately taking it in hand, wrote his celebrated

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1710.

Excessive  
demerits of  
this book.

Bentley  
writes his  
Emenda-  
tions.



CHAP. IX. 'Emendations' on 323 passages of the Fragments, in  
1710. which he exposed the ignorance and presumption of the editor with the keenest irony; giving at the same time his own corrections, conceived in his happiest style, and for the most part certain and irrefragable. He says of this, as of the generality of his works, that it was composed *extempore*, and finished on the 13th of December. Some doubt has been insinuated respecting the truth of this assertion, as he certainly did not send it for publication till March or April following: but the reader, who has seen in what way his time and his mind were occupied in the interval, will easily believe that he could not have found leisure to revise, or even bestow a thought upon Greek fragments<sup>23</sup>. The work itself does not indicate much labour or research; it evidently proceeds from a person familiar with the subject, secure in his positions, and satisfied with exposing the worthlessness of Le Clerc's edition, and the intolerable presumption of the editor.

Bentley's  
 reported  
 motives.

Tradition has recorded two motives which induced Bentley to criticise this publication. It is well known that there had formerly existed a scheme, which appears to have originated with Locke, for bringing over Le Clerc to England, and providing for him in the Church<sup>24</sup>. His heterodox opinions, approaching to Socinianism, must have long put an end to any views of that description. A report however prevailed that Lord Halifax still meditated giving him a home and provision in this country; and Bentley's own place of Library Keeper was thought of, as well cal-

<sup>23</sup> This insinuation is from his friend Dr. Hare, to whom the Emendations were sent, who says, in his *Epistola Critica*, p. 6, (*not.*), "*Scriptæ hæ Emendationes OPERA EXTEMPORALI et finitæ Idibus Dec. 1709. Vid. Burmann. præfat. p. 6. ad quem mense demum Aprili sunt transmissæ.*"

<sup>24</sup> See the correspondence between Locke and Molineux.



culated for that purpose: this was believed to have induced our critic to prove that, in ancient literature at least, he was a mere pretender<sup>25</sup>. The other story has a greater air of probability: it is said that Bentley was dining in a company at Lambeth Palace, where the merits of Le Clerc, and the idea of importing him into this country, happened to be the subject of conversation. His principles were allowed to be dangerous, but all parties agreed in the praise of his universal learning; and his publication of Menander and Philémon, which had just appeared, being alleged as a new proof, Bentley alone ventured to dissent from the general applause; and his 'Emendations' were written in support of his opinion<sup>26</sup>. Whatever foundation there may have been for these anecdotes, we know that the Doctor considered himself ill used by Le Clerc's critique of his Notes on the Tusculans in the *Bibliothèque Choisie*, and on that account had no disposition to spare the reviewer<sup>27</sup>. But, independently of other motives, it was of importance to the interests of literature to expose the arrogance of this pretender, who was assuming the character of dictator in a department where he had not the slightest right to interfere; and the peculiar acquirements of Bentley pointed him out as the scholar most competent to pronounce the censure of the learned world on the presumptuous intruder.

<sup>25</sup> This account is given by Bishop Newton, in his Life, p. 30. A similar story is told in some manuscripts of Mr. George Ashby, in possession of Sir Thomas Cullum, Bart.

<sup>26</sup> Kippis, *Biographia Britannica*, vol. ii. p. 244: he found this anecdote in a paper of memoranda by Dr. Michael Lort, Greek Professor at Cambridge. The latter gentleman having lived some years in Trinity College, in daily society and intimacy with Dr. Walker and other friends and contemporaries of Bentley, about whom he was much interested, did certainly enjoy opportunities of hearing authentic anecdotes respecting him.

<sup>27</sup> This appears from Bentley's letter to Le Clerc, shortly to be mentioned.



## CHAP. IX.

1710.Sends the  
book to be  
printed in  
Holland.Peter Bur-  
man.His feud  
with Le  
Clerc.

It was determined that a mystery should attend the birth of this produce of Bentley's genius. Either not having leisure to superintend the publication himself, or choosing that it should come before the world anonymously, he sent it to be published in Holland, the country where Le Clerc resided, and where it was sure to excite most sensation. Of all the Dutch scholars whom this self-elected arbiter of literature had made his enemies, there was none so exasperated against him as Peter Burman of Utrecht. In addition to the common offence which Le Clerc had given by decrying the plodding and laborious line of scholarship, Burman had a peculiar and personal cause of resentment. Finding his craft constantly attacked by the Swiss reviewer, he defended himself in the preface to an edition of Petronius Arbiter with warmth and indignation; and added something more than general censure, an exposure of many gross errors committed by Le Clerc, particularly in Latin prosody. The latter replied by a virulent article in his journal, which went beyond the field of literary contest, and impeached the moral character of Burman on the ground of his writing commentaries upon so licentious an author as Petronius. This produced a furious rejoinder, called *Le Gazettier Menteur*, a little book which Burman chose to write in French, although a foreign language, that it might be legible to all the readers of the *Bibliothèque*; and certainly makes out a very strong case against Le Clerc, and the arrogance of his pretensions to universal scholarship. This quarrel, which ceased only with their lives, had just reached its height, when Burman received, he knew not from whence, the welcome and unlooked-for present of Bentley's 'Emendations,' written under the name of *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*. The idea of such a title seems to have been taken from Le Clerc himself,



who had given in his journal a censure of Gronovius's Arrian, pretending to come from an Oxonian who subscribed himself *C. Veratius Philellen*. As a further disguise, Phileleutherus takes occasion to speak of Bentley in terms of commendation, lamenting however the rough treatment which he had lately given to Gronovius. But, in spite of all deception, the internal evidence of Bentley's style, and his peculiar metrical skill, with which no one could compete, must have immediately discovered the real author. The packet was accompanied by no other communication to Burman, than a permission to publish it with a preface of his own<sup>28</sup>: a leave of which he availed himself with the greatest good-will, insulting over his fallen adversary with as much triumph as if it had been his own, and not another's hand, by which he was overthrown. While the book was in the press Burman selected a bundle of Le Clerc's errors unnoticed by Phileleutherus, and made a display of them in the preface, with the consoling assurance that six hundred more might still be discovered.

The secret of this production was not duly kept even till its birth: a report was circulated that Burman was about to publish something written by Bentley against the editor of Menander. This was owing to

Dr. Francis Hare.

<sup>28</sup> The title of the book is "*Emendationes in Menandri et Philemonis Reliquias, ex nupera editione Joannis Clerici: ubi multa Grotii et aliorum, plurima vero Clerici errata castigantur, Auctore PHILELEUTHERO LIPSIENSI:*"

*Est genus hominum, qui esse primos se omnium rerum volunt,  
Nec sunt.*—TER.

The inscription in Bentley's own hand was, "Hæc edantur a Cl. Petro Burmanno, qui præfationem, et, si velit, dedicationem præmittat: scriptæ hæc emendationes opera extemporali, et finitæ Idibus Decembribus anno MDCCIX." He added also, "Clericus omnia Menandri loca ex Alberti Fabricii Bibliotheca Græca sumpsit, Dramata scilicet ex Menandri, qui ibi legitur, catalogo, loca sine Dramatis nomine ex indicibus Scholiastarum et aliorum Scriptorum ibidem; neque tamen unquam Fabricium laudat."



CHAP. IX. 1710. the indiscretion of his friend Dr. Francis Hare, who was then in Holland as Chaplain General to the army of the Duke of Marlborough, and to whom the conveyance of the parcel was committed. He put it into the hands of Johnson, a Scotch bookseller at the Hague, to be forwarded to Utrecht; but, forgetting or disregarding the caution of secrecy, declared that he had received it from Dr. Bentley. Alexander Cunningham, the future antagonist of our critic, who also resided at the Hague, having learnt these tidings from the bookseller, apprised Le Clerc, with whom he was intimate, and propagated the news with much industry<sup>29</sup>. The unfortunate editor, alarmed at the report of his having fallen into such hands, first made an indirect attempt to discover the truth, and then addressed himself to Bentley, calling upon him to contradict, by the first post, the report of his having written the forthcoming book, as an enormity unbecoming a Christian and a divine; at the same time denouncing his resentment and hostility, if he did not instantly clear himself of the charge, and adding that silence would be considered a confession. To this menacing epistle, the Doctor immediately returned an answer, which perhaps Le Clerc found more difficult to digest than even the public castigation that followed.

Alexander  
Cunning-  
ham.

Le Clerc  
writes a  
threatening  
letter.

July 1.  
Bentley's  
reply.

<sup>29</sup> These particulars were told to Bentley in a letter from Burman.—In Phileleutherus's dedication of the 'Remarks on a late Discourse of Free-thinking,' addressed to Hare, he alludes ironically to his want of secrecy respecting this commission:

*"To My very Learned and Honoured Friend, F. H. D.D. At London, Great Britain.*

"Sir,

"Your many and great civilities to me since our first acquaintance in the Low Countries, and the kind office you then did me in conveying my Annotations on Menander to the press; but above all your taciturnity and secrecy, that have kept the true author of that book undiscovered hitherto, if not unguessed; have encouraged me to send these present REMARKS," &c.



Copies of both letters have been preserved, and nothing more strongly exemplifies Bentley's clear, powerful, and caustic style, or his acute talent in disputation. Without indulging in the least invective, he exposes the arrogance of Le Clerc's pretensions; his presumption in first undertaking a work to which he knew himself to be every way unequal, and then expecting that no one should venture to censure the performance; his childish precipitation in complaining of a book which he had not seen, and of the contents of which he could know nothing; and the insufferable insolence of his threatening language. The letter however contains a fair acknowledgment of his general merits; and though it refuses either to confess or deny the authorship of the 'Emendations,' since the inquiry had been made with menaces, yet it promises in conclusion that if, after the book was published and had been read by both parties, any question were put to him, he would answer without reserve. Le Clerc however was satisfied with this reply, and never requested any further epistolary favour from Dr. Bentley.

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When the 'Emendations' appeared, the real Phileleutherus was immediately detected; it being agreed on all hands that there was but one scholar living who was capable of producing them. The book was read with such avidity by the learned, that in the course of three weeks not a single copy remained unsold; an occurrence which, though common in the effusions of a popular novelist or a party pamphleteer, is unexampled in the case of a classical publication. This performance is too well known among scholars to need any further commendation; but I shall mention, as a peculiar proof of its merit, that although it consists principally in the exposure of the errors of an ignoramus, its learning and spirit are such, that a repeated

Bentley's  
Emenda-  
tions.



CHAP. IX. perusal, far from surfeiting the reader, never fails to  
 1710. convey fresh interest and amusement.

Gronovius.

The first combatant whom this publication called into the field was Gronovius. He had been sufficiently irritated by the severe treatment he experienced in the 'Notes on the Tusculans;' but was now provoked almost to madness by Bentley's correction of one of the fragments of Menander (omitted by Le Clerc), which is contained in *Stephanus Byzantinus De Dodone*, a book published by himself eighteen years before. In correcting the errors committed by Gronovius in this fragment, he spoke of him with a perpetual sneer disguised in the civilest language, which perhaps proved more unpalatable than open abuse. This veteran editor was engaged at the same moment in a literary feud with Le Clerc, who had handled him roughly in his *Bibliothèque*. Such opposite impulses of resentment would have prevented any other person from meddling at all in the dispute; but Gronovius was too passionately fond of literary warfare to be deterred by an awkward position of circumstances: he immediately printed a small volume, divided equally between the abuse of Bentley and the abuse of Le Clerc. The very title indicates the temper in which it was composed—*Infamia Emendationum in Menandrum nuper editarum*. The greater part of the attack upon our critic consists of an angry and bitter contest respecting the fragment of four or five lines just mentioned. His spirit of invective is terrible; and, as if to increase the disgust of the reader, it is expressed in a harsh and unpolished style. Gray hairs, instead of softening the mind of Gronovius, seemed only to have added rancour to his resentments; and more than forty years' perseverance in editing the classics had failed to humanize his manners. From Bentley he turns to the discomfited Le

Infamia  
 Emenda-  
 tionum, &c.



Clerc, at the exposure of whose ignorance he exults; and, being convinced that he could never more be formidable as a censor of other scholars, he kicks and tramples upon him without forbearance or compunction. To the letter from the supposed Oxonian, *Philellen*, he replies under the name of his correspondent, *M. Lucilius Profuturus*, in a strain of insolent retaliation. Of this performance I have nothing more to remark, except that it has become deservedly scarce.

Le Clerc, being totally incompetent to defend himself against the strictures of Phileleutherus, was obliged to look abroad for assistance. A review of the controversy appeared at Leipsic in the *Acta Eruditorum*, written by Stephen Bergler, the future commentator on Alciphron and Aristophanes. Of all the writers who engaged in the controversy on Menander, Bergler was, with the exception of our hero, the best Grecian. He entertained a friendly feeling towards Le Clerc, in whose favour he says all that the case would admit; and, while he finds a few defects in the 'Emendations,' he candidly owns Bentley's superiority to himself, as well as to all persons alive, in that description of knowledge.

It would have been better for Le Clerc to have rested satisfied with this judgment, and to have drawn the public attention no further to a matter so injurious to his literary character. But unfortunately he received as a present a collection of notes on Menander, decrying the publication of Phileleutherus, and reviling him in the worst terms of insult and invective. This was the production of the notorious John Cornelius de Pauw of Utrecht, a person who has justly been considered the pest and disgrace of letters. He was then in the beginning of a career, which he continued for at least forty years, abusing most other scholars,

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1710.

Bergler.

Jan. 1711.

De Pauw.



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1710.

and boasting of his own merits with offensive arrogance. His learning was, I think, more extensive than has been generally allowed; but it was without accuracy: and so utterly destitute was he of judgment and taste that his critical writings have little or no value. This however constitutes but the smallest part of his demerits: all his writings prove him to be devoid of candour, good faith, good manners, and every gentlemanly feeling: and while he unites all the defects and bad qualities that were ever found in a critic or commentator, he adds one peculiar to himself, an incessant propensity to indecent allusions. Such was the principal ally whom the great philosopher could find in the hour of his distress. Le Clerc's good sense should have made him reject such assistance, which, so far from being a support to a weak cause, would have injured the strongest: but soreness and vexation overcame his better judgment, and made him catch at an opportunity of being revenged upon Bentley. Nevertheless it is plain from one or two passages in his preface that he was really ashamed of his auxiliary. The report of Bentley's College quarrel, and the accusation of his rapacity having reached Holland, the name assumed by De Pauw was *Philargyrius Cantabrigiensis*; an obvious insult for which the controversy in hand afforded no excuse: and the whole title of the book was a parody of that of *Phileleutherus*<sup>30</sup>. Le Clerc, in a long preface, labours to gloss over the enormous demerits of his own performance. But the defence is so inadequate as only to prove the justice of the castigation which

Philargy-  
rius Canta-  
brigiensis.

Le Clerc's  
defence.

<sup>30</sup> *Philargyrii Cantabrigiensis Emendationes in Menandri et Philemonis Reliquias ex nupera Editione Joannis Clerici. Ubi quædam Grotii et aliorum, plurima vero Phileleutheri Lipsiensis errata castigantur. Cum Præfatione Joan. Clerici. Amstelodami. 1711.* The motto is the same as that of 'Phileleutherus.'



he had sustained. He offers many common-place observations upon the difficulty and uncertainty of restoring corrupt fragments; but that was the very reason which made his presumption in undertaking such a work the more insufferable. In reply to the charge of gross ignorance of metre, he asserts that, when he divided the quotations into lines resembling Iambics in nothing but in length, he was aware of their unmetrical state, but thought it better to do this than to alter the words found in the books where they are quoted: a defence which leaves unnoticed the heaviest censure of all, namely, that he actually *had* altered many of the quotations without even apprizing the reader, and thereby produced a large portion of those unmetrical lines for which he apologized. To Bentley and Burman, whom he designates by the respective titles of Thrasonides and Giton, Le Clerc's defence must have been a triumph. As for De Pauw, his performance is so worthless, and his style so disgusting and execrable, that scarcely any one can read three pages of it, unless it be with the temper of his enemy Dorville, who, when composing the *Vannus Critica*, hunted out with avidity all the faults of this unhappy critic. The real *Philargyrius* continued many years unknown: he was, I find, supposed to be Olearius of Leipsic, the editor of Philostratus; till at length De Pauw acknowledged the precious production as his offspring<sup>31</sup>. The book concluded with

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1710.

Salvini.

<sup>31</sup> There is in the possession of my learned friend Dr. Maltby a copy of *Phileleutherus* and one of *Philargyrius*, bound together in a volume, formerly belonging to Dr. Davies, President of Queen's College, and editor of Cicero, who has written the following note in the title page of *Philargyrius*: "Auctor hujus Libri Gottefridus Olearius, qui Philostratum edidit. Hoc mihi dixit Abr. Gronovius, Jac. Fil. At Bentleius a J. Corn. de Pauw hoc opus elaboratum esse contendit." That Bentley was right in his opinion is placed beyond a doubt by De Pauw's own confession in his Preface to Phrynichus, as well as in other publications. Bentley never bestowed any notice upon this book except the following allusion in his



CHAP. IX. a set of trifling and puerile notes by Salvini the  
 1710. Florentine Professor. Such was the triple alliance,  
 which undertook to chastize the temerity and over-  
 throw the credit of Dr. Bentley!

long note on Hor. Art. Poet. V. 441, where, speaking of Gronovius, he says, "Nam quod rursus nupero libello me oblique impetivit, *ut et alter nescio quis*, uterque sane operam et oleum perdiderunt: nondum enim eorum ictus tanti facio, ut iterum a me vapulent:

*"Multo majoris colaphi mecum veneunt."*



CHAPTER X.

*Great political change in 1710—Vacancies of senior-fellowships in Trinity College—Fifty-four articles of accusation presented against Dr. Bentley—Account of Laughton, the Proctor—He disturbs a party of the representatives and their friends at the Rose tavern—Politics at Cambridge—General election—Expulsion of Professor Whiston—Barnes's edition of Homer—His quarrel with Bentley—His death and character—Bentley makes interest with the Queen for protection against his prosecutors—The Bishop of Ely requires his answer to the articles—Bentley presents a petition and complaint to the Crown—Question of the Visitor of Trinity College—Government stops the proceedings of the Bishop—Opinion of the Attorney and Solicitor General—Bentley throws himself on the protection of the Lord Treasurer—His change of party—Questions submitted to the Queen's counsel—Extraordinary efforts of Bentley to finish his Horace—Dedication to the Earl of Oxford—Preface—Theory of the 'Tempora Horatiana'—Excellences and faults of Bentley's Horace—Numerous publications ridiculing the book—John Ker's attack on his Latinity—Le Clerc's Review of his Horace—Atterbury's compliments of the work—Another edition at Amsterdam.*

A CONSIDERABLE time intervened before the design of the Fellows of Trinity College to prosecute their Master for malversation could be put into execution. The delay seems partly owing to the professional avocations of Miller the conductor of the proceedings, and partly to the overwhelming interest which the political events of the year 1710 exercised over the minds of all persons in the kingdom. The impeachment of Dr. Sacheverell caused an uncommon ebullition of spirits, and threw the country into an agitation as great as almost any event recorded in our history. The flame excited by these proceedings proved the main cause of the great ministerial revolution, by which the powerful government of Lord Godolphin and the Whigs was overthrown, and the High-church party, under

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1710.

Change in  
the Queen's  
ministers.



CHAP. X. the lead of Harley and St. John, were admitted into  
 1710. the councils of the Queen.

To Dr. Bentley this great and unexpected triumph of the Tories seemed highly inauspicious ; particularly as he had been endeavouring, in his pamphlet, to represent the opposition which he met with in his College as the fruit of his attachment to the Whig interest. It was now concluded that he could expect no favour and no quarter from those who had obtained the ascendant : and the circumstance of the mastership, when vacant, being in the disposal of Government, contributed to render his situation alarming. It may be noticed as a curious fact that his three opponents, Atterbury, Smalridge, and Freind, by whom the Phalaris controversy was conducted, had confederated to produce the popular defence of Dr. Sacheverell, and were the first persons to experience the patronage of the new ministry. To complete the coincidence, his old enemy Dr. Swift, who was strongly prejudiced against him, became the intimate companion and confidant of the two leading members of the cabinet. But, threatening as this aspect of affairs might seem, the address or good fortune of Dr. Bentley carried him safely, if not triumphantly, through all perils.

Bentley attempts to divide his opponents.

His first endeavours were to break the confederacy of his Fellows, and by alternate promises and threats to induce some of them to withdraw their names from the prosecution. Among other efforts to procure the acquiescence of his College council in the schemes detailed in the last chapter, he had offered successively to the ninth and tenth Fellows, an immediate admission to the rank and profits of the Seniority on condition of compliance with his propositions. With this object he attempted to vacate the place of Mr. Hawkins, the oldest of the body, who had for many years

Hawkins.



laboured under mental malady, and was then the inmate of a private madhouse; alleging that he was incapable of discharging the duties of a Senior<sup>1</sup>. It was of course remarked that his removal from the number of the eight, supposing the reason to be valid, ought to have taken place long before, and not have been reserved to answer a particular purpose; and the Board, conceiving this to be an attack upon their freeholds, declared their dissent; or, to use the Master's sarcastic expression, 'the majority of the Seniors were not willing to part with him out of their number.' However, about June this year Hawkins died. The statutes direct that within nine days after the vacancy of a senior-fellowship a successor shall be appointed by the Master and remaining seven; and they moreover enjoin that the next in standing shall be chosen, unless there exist some weighty objection considered by the Master and major part of the Seniors a sufficient cause for his rejection. Accordingly, at the meeting held within the prescribed time, the Seniors unanimously chose Mr. Cooper, the next in succession and one of the prosecutors; but the Master refused to admit him, alleging that he wanted every qualification required by the statutes, in which the members of this College council are described as *octo viri et gravitate et prudentia præstantes*. Whatever might be the objections against the qualifications or character of Cooper, it was clear that in his refusal he was actuated by feelings of interest or revenge; since this was the same individual to whom he had offered a senior-fellowship a few months before. Before the

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1710.

Vacancy in  
the Senior-  
ity.

<sup>1</sup> *True State of Trinity College*, p. 80. John Hawkins was the contemporary of Dr. Barrow; he was elected Fellow in 1650, and became B.D. in 1661: his grace for the degree of D.D. passed in College in 1680, but he did not proceed to its completion. He had been a member of Trinity under ten successive Masters.



CHAP. X. 1710. end of the year Cooper was admitted by the Seniors, in the Master's absence. The only fruit reaped by Dr. Bentley from this demonstration of power was that it became an additional item in the articles of accusation, which were immediately afterwards exhibited to the Bishop of Ely; and his conduct in this particular may perhaps be considered as among the most serious in the catalogue of his alleged malversations<sup>2</sup>.

Fifty-four  
articles of  
accusation  
against  
Bentley.  
July 11,  
1710.

The accusation was now presented in form, comprising no less than fifty-four articles, and subscribed not only by the same names as the Petition, but by seven other Fellows, making the complainants a clear majority of the College<sup>3</sup>. These numerous charges embraced almost every act of Dr. Bentley's administration, and every part of his conduct since his admission to the mastership. The material questions have been already laid before the reader, and their merits impartially discussed. Miller, by whom the articles were drawn up, had been careful to turn into an accusation every particular for which Bentley had in his printed pamphlet assumed merit to himself. Several of the articles are frivolous, charging the Master with violations of statute in cases where an adherence to the

<sup>2</sup> Bentley's defence in this particular was that Cooper was addicted to intemperance: this was denied by the opposite party, who stated that he was as sensible a man as any in England.

In October this year another senior-fellowship became vacant by the death of Mr. William Mayer; but, the Master being absent in town, his deputy did not dare even to give notice of the vacancy: at length, on the 26th of December, the Seniority having met to vote a dividend, Mr. Cooper protested against the validity of any proceeding, till the body was completed by filling up the vacancy. This being a sound and tenable objection, they admitted Cooper into the first vacancy, and then proceeded to elect Hanbury, the next in order, into that occasioned by the death of Mayer. *Rud's Diary*.

<sup>3</sup> The additional names were, Thomas Pilgrim, Thomas Hill, John Williams, David Fleming, Robert Johnson, William Smith, and Alexander Burrell.



literal enactment was scarcely possible : others made it criminal in him to have meditated and proposed measures which were never carried into execution : many more contained charges of negligence, which, though culpable, called for censure or admonition rather than expulsion. But when all the complaints of this description have been set aside, there remain some of serious import, and such as demanded the cognizance of a judge.

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1710.

As it is directed that the accused Master shall be 'examined' on each charge, it was thought right that the articles should be put into the form of questions addressed to the party arraigned, which gives them a quaint and even ludicrous character. It was also resolved to engage the public as a party against the Doctor : accordingly the whole accusation, as soon as it had been presented to the Bishop, was published in a pamphlet, along with those parts of the College statutes which he was accused of having violated <sup>4</sup>.

The powers of a Visitor enable him to hear a complaint in a summary manner : yet such was the caution of Bishop Moore, that it was not till after long delays that any further step was taken in this affair, on the decision of which the peace and settlement of Trinity College depended. He first sent a copy of the articles to the Master, who appears to have taken no notice of them whatever ; and thus the affair was suffered to slumber for three months longer. In the meantime some other matters occurred at Cambridge, which, though not directly affecting the subject of these memoirs, are somewhat connected with his history,

Delay in  
the proceed-  
ings.

August.

<sup>4</sup> The title of this book is, '*A true Copy of the Articles against Dr. Bentley, exhibited to the Right Reverend Father in God, John, Lord Bishop of Ely, by many of the Fellows of Trinity College in Cambridge, together with the College-Statute DE AMOTIONE MAGISTRI, and several other Clauses of the College Statutes, with references to the Articles.* London, 1710.'



CHAP. X. and will be interesting to the reader, as exhibiting the  
1710. state of feeling and parties in the University at this  
 eventful period.

Laughton,  
 the Proctor.

The Senior Proctor was Mr. Richard Laughton, the tutor of Clare Hall, a man of learning and virtue, whose exemplary attention to his pupils had elevated his College to a high rank in public estimation, and was the theme of universal applause. As Proctor he had been indefatigable in repressing the licence of the young men, and restoring the ancient discipline of the University: in particular he had put down some clubs, and constantly dispersed the parties at taverns, which according to the practice of that day used to be kept up till a late hour. He had likewise curbed the licentiousness of the tripes, and forbidden any personal reflections on the senior members of the University; whereby it was foretold that the spirit of that exercise would be altogether destroyed, *sublato jure nocendi*; a prediction which we may observe, by the bye, has not been verified by the result. Mr. Laughton had supplied to Dr. Bentley a testimony under his hand of the good conduct and good discipline which he had observed among the students of Trinity; a document which the latter took care to insert in his 'Letter to the Bishop of Ely.' But it unfortunately happened that this valuable member of the University was a violent party-man, and appears to have suffered such feelings to overpower all sense of discretion, as the following anecdote will too plainly prove.

Party at the  
 Rose.  
 July 3.

The representatives of the University, the Hon. Arthur Annesley and the Hon. Dixie Windsor, had come as usual to visit their constituents at the Commencement, and happened to be passing the evening with a select party of friends at the Rose tavern. The company, who were all in the Tory interest, consisted of about ten persons; among them were



Sir John Cotton, member for the town of Cambridge, a baronet of the oldest family in the county; Thomas Paske, LL.D. of Clare Hall; Mr. Gooch, of Caius; and Mr. Middleton, of Trinity College: the two last of whom will make a prominent figure in a future part of this history. About ten o'clock the party was surprised at the unceremonious entrance of Mr. Laughton preceded by a lictor, and followed by a number of under-graduates as his body guard. He immediately ordered the whole company to leave the house, and disperse to their respective colleges. Whether in this procedure he acted from error or design may admit of a doubt; but as no person of the company was *in statu pupillari* and amenable to his authority, there was no pretence or excuse for his interference. This strange visitation provoked much laughter: the Proctor, having intimated that he would not quit the room till the party had dispersed, was invited by some to take his seat at the table; others begged that he would dismiss his myrmidons; one gentleman proposed to him the toast they were drinking, and that toast was 'Doctor Sacheverell.' Laughton's political feelings now conspired with a sense of slighted authority to resent this affront, and he left the room with expressions of great indignation. But being a person not easily daunted, within an hour he again burst upon them, and summoned them to depart: the rudeness of his behaviour only excited fresh merriment: at twelve o'clock he made them a third visitation, at which time they had called for their reckoning. But the Proctor's wrath did not end with the evening: he drew up a formal complaint against the parties, which he presented to the Vice Chancellor and Heads, demanding satisfaction for the affronts put upon him in the execution of his office, and calling for the punishment of the tavern-keeper,



CHAP. X. Alderman Langham, as the harbourer of such lawless  
 1710. revellers.

No words can place the folly and indiscretion of Mr. Laughton's conduct in a stronger light than his own account of the transaction, which, unfortunately for him, found its way into print<sup>5</sup>. His complaint, being the mere effusion of temper, met with no attention from the superiors of the University; although the Vice Chancellor Dr. Roderick, Provost of King's, was considered of the Whig party as well as himself. This anecdote may serve as a proof how dangerous it is to indulge in the heats of faction, by which even the best and most gifted men may be led into the commission of extravagancies. The gentleman of whom we are speaking was not only a good disciplinarian and good instructor, but deserves the praise of having taken the lead in making the study of the true system of philosophy universal at Cambridge: for by choosing the *Principia* of Newton as the predominant subject both of the exercises in the schools and the mathematical examination for degrees, he enforced among the students the general attention to that immortal work, which has from his time never ceased to distinguish the University of Cambridge<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> An account of this absurd story, along with the Proctor's still more absurd representation of it, will be found in *The University of Cambridge Vindicated*, p. 18; a pamphlet written at the time by Styan Thirlby: it was brought forward again in print by Arthur Ashley Sykes, in the year 1719, with the view of reflecting on Doctors Gooch and Middleton; the latter of whom, in his *Remarks on the Case of Dr. Bentley farther stated*, gives a very full detail of the business, and a very satisfactory refutation of the only real charge laid against the party at the Rose, that one of them (Dr. Paske) appeared to have drunk to great excess by the tone and accent of his voice. Their reckoning, when they separated, did not amount to 1s. 6d. a head.

<sup>6</sup> This fact is testified by Sir William Browne, who was Mr. Laughton's pupil at the time when he was Proctor, in his speech to the Royal Society, Nov. 19, 1772. See *Nichols's Lit. Anecd.* vol. iii. p. 323. The subject of the introduction of the study of Newton's works at Cambridge is



No sooner were the Whigs dismissed from the government, than addresses of thanks to her Majesty poured in from all parts of the country; among which that from the University of Oxford was conspicuous. On this occasion Cambridge did not follow the example of the sister University: but as High-church feelings predominated there, though with a more moderate tone than at Oxford, much dissatisfaction was felt at the omission, which was generally attributed to the Vice Chancellor. The eccentric Styan Thirlby, then an undergraduate of Jesus College, published a violent and intemperate pamphlet on this subject; showing his rancorous and hot-headed temper, which age and experience did not mollify. He abuses Bentley without measure or decency, having already contracted that dislike for him, which displayed itself some years afterwards in his edition of Justin Martyr<sup>7</sup>.

CHAP. X.  
1710.

Politics at  
Cambridge.

The new ministry lost no time in availing themselves of their popularity by a dissolution of Parliament. Mr. Annesley, one of the representatives, being just removed to the House of Peers by the death of his brother the Earl of Anglesea, a contest took place at the general election, which displayed the prevalent politics of the University. Though there were four Tory candidates, each standing on a separate interest, no Whig ventured to come to a poll; and the Senior Proctor, just before the expiration of his office, had the mortification of pronouncing Mr. Windsor and Dr.

General  
election.

Oct. 5,  
1710.

clearly and distinctly treated in a paper in the *Museum Criticum*, vol ii. p. 514, in answer to some unaccountable mis-statements published by Professor Playfair.

<sup>7</sup> The title of this worthless tract is, "The University of Cambridge vindicated from the Imputation of Disloyalty it lies under on the account of not Addressing: as also from the malicious and foul Aspersions of Dr. B——ly, late Master of Trinity College: and of a certain Officer and pretended Reformer in the said University. Written by the Author. London. 1710."



CHAP. X. 1710. Paske, two of the party at the Rose, to be the elected members for the University<sup>8</sup>. In this contest it does not appear that Dr. Bentley took any part: he was in fact absent from Cambridge at the time.

Expulsion  
of Professor  
Whiston.  
Oct. 30,  
1710.

The next event was the prosecution of Professor Whiston for the publication of Arian doctrines. He was twice convened before the academical court; and, remaining obstinate in his resolution to propagate opinions hostile to those of the Church, was banished from the University by the sentence of the Vice Chancellor and eleven Heads. In these proceedings the Master of Trinity took no share: he entertained for Whiston a personal regard; and while he pitied his perverse judgment, he respected his sincerity, and appears to have been always ready to render him service. In the following year, when Whiston dedicated to the two Houses of Convocation the 'Historical Preface to his Primitive Christianity Revived,' thereby compelling the Synod to notice the work, and inviting its censures, Bentley went to him, and endeavoured to persuade him not to court the ruin of himself and his family by perseverance in such a headstrong course. But his arguments, like those of other friends, were as vain as if addressed to the winds; so thoroughly was he persuaded that he should shortly bring over the whole nation to his own theory of 'Primitive Christianity<sup>9</sup>.'

Notwithstanding the banishment of Whiston, the Heads of Colleges did not proceed to appoint a successor to the Lucasian professorship for more than a

<sup>8</sup> The numbers were: for Mr. Windsor, 201; Dr. Paske, 149; Mr. Shaw, 93; Mr. Gill, 64. *Rud's Journal*. Thirlby says, that a Whig who canvassed could not get more than ten votes. Of course this was not literally the fact.

<sup>9</sup> *Whiston's Life*, vol. i. p. 131. The account of the proceedings against him in the University is given by Whiston at great length, in his appendix to an Historical Preface to *Primitive Christianity Revived*, in 1711.



year; intending no doubt to give him an opportunity, by timely recantation, to resume his station in the University: for this forbearance it is probable that he was indebted to the friendly interference of the Master of Trinity<sup>10</sup>. CHAP. X.  
1710.

In the latter part of 1710 Joshua Barnes gave to the world his edition of the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer, with a dedication of the former to the Earl of Pembroke, and the latter to Hyde Earl of Rochester, the Queen's uncle. This work was published by the editor in a fit of wrath, great as that of the hero of the Iliad himself; and the object of his resentment was Dr. Bentley. It was no secret that our critic entertained contempt for the Greek scholarship of the Professor, whose deplorable want of judgment and critical accuracy, as well as warmth of temper and childish irritability, exposed him to unceasing ridicule; from which not even the fame of extensive learning, undeniably his due, afforded him protection. The success of Barnes's innumerable publications not having been such as to prejudice the booksellers in his favour, no one of that fraternity could be found to undertake the cost and risk of the Homer. But the Professor had married a widow with a handsome jointure; a large share of which he devoted to this expensive publication, or, to use his own term, he entrusted his whole fortune *huic uni Homericæ navi*<sup>11</sup>. He was anxious to dedicate this his great work to the

Barnes's  
edition of  
Homer.

His resent-  
ment  
against  
Bentley.

<sup>10</sup> The vacancy was filled up Nov. 19, 1711, when Nicholas Saunderson, A.M. of Christ College, the mathematical prodigy, who had been blind from his infancy, was elected Lucasian Professor, by a majority of the votes of *six* Heads against *four*. His opponent was Christopher Hussey, Fellow of Trinity College, who was supported by Dr. Bentley. Saunderson delivered his inaugural speech on the 21st of January, following.

<sup>11</sup> The story is well known of Barnes having, as it is said, overcome the scruples of his wife, as to the employment of her money for this purpose, by persuading her that the author of the Iliad was no other than King Solomon.



CHAP. X.  
1710.

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Queen: but the compliment was declined, owing, as he believed, to the disparaging representations of Bentley. What foundation he had for this suspicion cannot be determined. It seems highly probable that Queen Anne, who was in the habit of conversing with her chaplains, might have asked the Doctor for his opinion as to the forthcoming publication of Barnes; and if so, it is certain that his representations would not come up to the Professor's own notion of himself. But that he had deliberately done him an ill-natured turn is very unlikely. Barnes's preface exhibits a pitiable specimen of rage and mortified vanity: the poor fellow complains in the bitterest terms of envy and neglect; and particularly of one 'Zoilus,' one '*homo inimicus*,' whom he charges with impudence, arrogance, and malignity without measure. That all this indignation was levelled at Bentley there could be no doubt. Barnes, who had no notion of true criticism, held in aversion and contempt the new school of scholarship, which he saw superseding that in which he had been educated. He boasts with the most childish vanity of his own unrivalled learning and his acquaintance with Homer for above forty years; talks of the countenance he had received from the great men of former days, Sancroft, Gunning, Beaumont, Barrow, and Duport; while in allusion to Bentley he says, "*Quantum ad Græcarum Literarum cognitionem spectat, nondum illorum virilitas meam assecuta est pueritiam.*"

One cheering topic alone presented itself to the Professor. The change of ministry took place just at the time when he was writing the dedication of the *Odyssey* to Lord Rochester, who was himself made President of the Council. Barnes's exalted notion of monarchical power and divine right had formerly made him the panegyrist of King James II. and Lord



Chancellor Jefferies : he now hailed the accession of the new ministry as the harbinger of better times ; and there was not raised a louder song of triumph in the whole kingdom at the discomfiture of the Whigs, than that which burst forth from the editor of Homer.

CHAP. X.  
1711.

Dr. Bentley no sooner saw the publication, than he wrote to Mr. Davies, who was a friend of Barnes, lashing the vanity and arrogance of the Professor, in terms as severe and unsparing as possible. This epistle, though not intended to be communicated to any except Barnes himself, has been preserved, and exhibits the most complete specimen that exists of the Doctor's vehement and overwhelming style, when writing without premeditation, and actuated by feelings of anger ; and as such, although it is already in print, I cannot forbear giving it to the reader <sup>12</sup> :

Bentley's  
letter to  
Davies.

“ Dear Sir,

“ After you left me this morning, I borrowed of Dr. Sike Mr. Barnes's new edition of Homer, where I was told that I should find myself abused. I read over his dedications and prefaces, and there I found very opprobrious words against enemies in general, and one *Homo Inimicus* in particular ; which I cannot apply to myself, not being concerned in the accusation. But if Mr. Barnes has, or does declare in company, that he means me by those expressions, I assure him I shall not put up such an affront, and an injury too ; since I was one of his first subscribers, and an useful director to him, if he had followed good advice. He struts and swaggers like a Suffenus, and challenges that same enemy to come *aperte*, and show him any fault. If he mean me, I have but dipped yet into his notes, and yet I find every where just occasion of censure.

*Iliad* Ε. v. 101. Ἀλλὰ ἀποπτανέουσιν ἐρωήσουσι δὲ χάρμης.

Thus all editions have it ; but in this, we have it in the very text

Αὐτὰρ ἀποπτανέουσιν, ἐρωήσουσι δὲ χάρμης—and this noble note added ; αὐτὰρ, *ita omnino pro ἀλλὰ ut olim*. So we have αὐτὰρ clapt

<sup>12</sup> This letter was found, after Davies's death, by his successor in his parsonage-house at Fen-Ditton, and was first published in the Monthly Review for March 1756, vol. xiv. p. 202, at the end of a critique on Musgrave's edition of the Hippolytus of Euripides.



CHAP. X. in *pro imperio*, only to avoid the hiatus of two vowels ἀλλὰ ἀ—Now  
 1711. for this interpolation alone, his book deserves to be burnt. Let us  
 examine into the passage a little; what is ἀποπτανέουσιν? He  
 translates it *respicient*; but says not one word to explain it. His  
 friend Eustathius, to whom he owes the better half of his notes,  
 knows not what to make on't; whether it be ἀπ-όπτανέουσιν, from  
 όπταίνω, όπτω, i. e. αποβλέψουσιν; or ἀπὸ-πτανέουσιν, from πτῶ,  
 πταίνω, φοβοῦμαι, i. e. πτήξουσιν, or from πέτω, πταίνω, i. e.  
 πετασθήσονται. But whoever heard of either όπταίνω or πταίνω?  
 where does our Professor find either of them? He's wholly mute  
 upon this word, which is ἀπαξ λεγόμενον: and yet the wretch would  
 venture blindfold to put in αὐτάρ. But the true reading is thus:

Ἄλλ' ἀποπαπτανέουσιν, ἐρωήσουσι δὲ χάρμης.

Ἀποπαπταίνω. fut. παπτανῶ, Ionice παπτανέω. παπταίνω comes forty  
 times in Homer; and if he had been, as he thinks himself, *Mæonides*  
*sextus pavone ex Pythagoreo*, he might have found out the emenda-  
 tion, which is clear *per se*; but I will prove it so by authority.  
 Etymol. in Ἀποπτάμενος. πετῶ πεταίνω, καὶ παπτανῶ παπτανούσι,  
 καὶ μετὰ τῆς προθέσεως ἀπὸ, ἀποπτάνουσι; so it is printed indeed,  
 but it is evident that he writ it ἀποπτανέουσι, and had respect to  
 this place, as Sylburgius well observes. Again, Hesychius in the  
 right series between ἀπόπαξ and ἀπόπαρ has it thus; Ἀποπτανέουσιν,  
 περιβλέψουσιν ὅπως φύγωσιν. correct ἀποπαπτανέουσιν, περιβλέψουσιν:  
 he means this very passage, as appears by the scholiast, ἀποπτα-  
 νέουσιν· ἦτοι ἐς τὰς ναῦς αποβλέψουσιν, ἢ ἀλλάχοσε, ὃ ἐστι, φεύξονται.  
 What says our Professor to this jobb? Ἔργον Ὀμηρείοιο τόδ' ἔπλετο  
 Βαρνεσίοιο, to foist in αὐτάρ of his own head, and so, *quantum in se*, ex-  
 tinguish the true reading for ever, which, while Ἄλλὰ was preserved  
 in the text, might some time be retrieved<sup>13</sup>.

I dipped into his second volume, and there I found this learned  
 correction: Od. Λ. v. 546, p. 307. Agamemnon, says the scholiast,  
 to judge fairly whether Ajax or Ulysses deserved Achilles's armour,  
 αἰχμαλώτους τῶν Τρώων ἀγαγὼν ἠρώτησεν, ἀπὸ ὁποτέρου τῶν Τρώων  
 μᾶλλον ἐλυπήθησαν· εἰπόντων δὲ Ὀδυσσεά, he gave the armour to him.  
 Here our Professor corrects it, ἀπὸ ὁποτέρου αὐτῶν οἱ Τρῶες, and thus

<sup>13</sup> Dr. Bentley mentioned this emendation afterwards to his friends.  
 His nephew, Thomas Bentley, writing to him from Rome, in 1726, says:  
 "There are two or three Homers here, (manuscripts) that have better  
 readings than are in Barnes's edition. In the best of them I looked  
 at that fine emendation of yours, ἄλλ' ἀποπαπτανέουσιν, &c. I found it  
 exactly and plainly so, and a scholion upon it; for there's a large scholiast  
 different from Didymus." Dr. Sam. Clarke had also heard of this correc-  
 tion, which is accordingly printed in the text of his Homer.



acts Thraso in his note; *Ita emendo, sensu postulante; quique hoc* CHAP. X.  
*valent, ad hos provoco.* Impertinence! to appeal to men of sense 1711.  
 here; as if it required much sense to know, that Ajax and Ulysses  
 were not Trojans. The business is to correct the place neatly; that  
 is, truly, as the author wrote it; which he has not done, but has gone  
 clumsily about it. I'll give him the true lection with altering half a  
 letter; ὑπὸ ὁποτέρου τῶν Ἡρώων, 'from which of the two heroes they  
 suffered most.' This is clear and neat. But our Professor, besides  
 his botching in the words, has sullied even the sense; for the cap-  
 tives were not asked, what all the Trojans, οἱ Τρῶες, thought, but  
 what they themselves thought.

Again, over the leaf, p. 309. v. 576, I find this worthy note: the  
 poet had said of Tityus, 'Ο δ' ἐπ' ἐννέα κεῖτο πέλεθρα. Upon which  
 the scholiast, Πλέθρον ἕκτον μέρος σταδίου—ὥστε τοῦ Τιτύου τὸ σῶμα  
 κατέχειν τόπον ἐνὸς ἡμίσεως σταδίου. So all former editions. One  
 πλέθρον being  $\frac{1}{6}$  of a stadium, 9 πλέθρα make one stadium and  $\frac{1}{2}$ .  
 Now comes our learned Professor's note. *Cum πλέθρον sit sexta pars*  
*stadii, et Tityus occupet novem πλέθρα, sequitur illum spatium occupare*  
*non unius dimidii, sed unius stadii et dimidii. Quare inter ἐνὸς*  
*ἡμίσεως addendum erat τὸ καί.* Here is your *Professor emeritus*, that  
 has made Greek his study *per annos quadraginta*, to whose *pueritia*  
 other people's manhood cannot reach. Now to pardon him his silly  
 interpolation of ἡμίσεως for ἡμίσεως, and so making the scholiast  
 write Ionic; it's plain he thought ἐνὸς ἡμίσεως signified *one half*, and  
 not *one and a half*; a piece of ignorance for which he deserves to be  
 turned out of the Chair; and for which, and many others like it, *si*  
*magis me irritaverit*, I, as his principal elector and governor, may call  
 him to account. What? he that in his preface has bragged of perus-  
 ing Pollux, Suidas, Etymologus, not to know what all of them teach  
 us! ἐν ἡμισυ τάλαντον says Pollux, *liber 9*, is Τρία ἡμιτάλαντα, one  
 talent and a half, not one half-talent, as this booby would think it.  
 So in those Lexicographers, and authors *passim*, δύο ἡμισυ, τέσσαρα  
 ἡμισυ, ἕξ ἡμισυ,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $4\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $6\frac{1}{2}$ ; δεκαδύο ἡμισυ  $12\frac{1}{2}$ , not twelve half, I  
 hope. A fit man, indeed, *per annos 15 in Græca Cathedra celeb.*  
*Academiæ sedere!* From thence I dipped in his fulsom ἐπίλογος,  
 enough to make a man spew that sees the vanity and insolence of  
 the writer, where I meet with these verses,

“ Δὴ τότε' ἐγὼ, τρίγλωσσος ἐὼν καὶ ἀοίδιμος ἀνὴρ,  
 Εὐπραγίης τ' ἔλαχον καὶ τιμῆς κυδιανείρης.”

But what a shame it is, for a man that pretends to have been a  
*teneris Unguiculis* a great grammarian and a poet, not to know, that  
 the second syllable of εὐπραγίης is long?

Sir, I write to you as a common friend, and desire you to show



CHAP. X. Mr. Barnes this letter; but not to let him keep it, nor transcribe it.

1711. If it be true, that he gives out, that he means me by those villanous characters, I shall teach him better manners towards his elector. For though I shall not honour him so much as to enter the lists against him myself, yet in one week's time, I can send a hundred such remarks as these, to his good friend Will. Baxter, (whom I have known these twenty years) who, before the parliament sits, shall pay him home for his Anacreon. But if it be otherwise, that he did not describe me under those general reproaches, a small satisfaction shall content me; which I leave you to be judge of: for I would not, without the utmost provocation, hurt the sale of his book, upon which he professes to have laid out his whole fortunes. Pray let me hear from you as soon as you can.

*Trinity College, Saturday Evening.*

“ I am, &c.”

Barnes's  
death and  
character.

What satisfaction Barnes ever made for his rude behaviour, we are not informed: he was approaching that period when rivalries and jealousies lose their powers of annoyance. The sale of his Homer not answering his expectations, he wrote in the course of 1711 three letters to the prime minister Harley, supplicating some preferment in reward of his long and brilliant career in literature<sup>13</sup>. But such a mark of Royal favour, if ever intended, was postponed too long; for in the following year poor Barnes was relieved by death from all his anxieties and distresses. As we shall have no further occasion to mention this Professor, we may just remark, that however deficient he was in the qualifications of a critic, his labours have been too much decried, and the credit justly due to them has been refused; and that in truth his edition of Homer, with all its faults and imperfections, is a more useful one to the reader than any which had preceded it; nay more, there was no edition published for ninety years after it, which upon the

<sup>14</sup> These three letters have been preserved in the Harleian Collection; Br. Mus. 7523. They are dated April 24, 1711, June 4, 1711, and Oct. 16, 1711. The second letter is one of congratulation to the Lord Treasure on his earldom.



whole deserves the preference of a scholar. In paying this tribute to Joshua Barnes, I am only performing an act of justice: though if the dead had any feeling for such matters, it would not, I fear, be sufficient to appease the offended manes of my indefatigable and warm-spirited predecessor.

CHAP. X.  
1711.

We must now revert to the affair of the College prosecution, which on a sudden assumed a new and curious complexion. Dr. Bentley, having in vain endeavoured to terminate this business by breaking the confederacy of his Fellows, betook himself to other measures, and laboured to procure the interposition of the Crown in his favour. The change of ministry, disastrous as it was to the party which he had hitherto espoused, did in fact afford him the opportunity of making immediate interest at court. It happened that Mrs. Bentley was related to Secretary St. John, and also to Mr. Masham, the husband of the favourite who had supplanted the Duchess of Marlborough in the good graces of her sovereign. Through the interference of these personages, particularly of Mrs. Masham, the circumstances of the dispute in Trinity College were represented both to the Queen and Mr. Harley in a light favourable to the Master. Her Majesty, who had long been acquainted with Bentley, entertained a high opinion of him: at the same time her correct feelings were shocked at the scandal attached to the characters of certain individuals among his prosecutors. That his administration had conferred several benefits upon the College, even his enemies could not deny: and whatever might be the other charges now brought against him, the indisputable fact that the prosecution originated in his new scheme respecting the College revenues operated upon unprejudiced minds in his favour. At first sight there was nothing unfair in his

Dr. Bentley's interest with the Queen and the ministry.



CHAP. X.  
1711.

Attempt to  
procure a  
Royal Letter in his  
own favour.

proposals; and the dislike entertained for them by the Fellows, although a good reason for their abandonment, appeared no ground for the expulsion and ruin of the proposer. The matter was represented in such a light to Mr. Harley, that he expressed a wish to have the dispute settled, and a provision made against similar dissensions for the future; and the Master was invited to suggest a mode for accomplishing the pacification of his College. Bentley immediately proposed that a Royal Letter should be sent to the College, deciding each of the questions under controversy: at the same time he offered the draught of such a paper, wherein the Queen, as representative of the founder, was to decide that point of the statutes which affected Mr. Miller's fellowship in a manner agreeable to the Master's interpretation; the College was commanded to adopt a scheme of dividends according to degrees, and to give a pecuniary compensation in lieu of the customary allowances to the Master; in order to remove all questions arising from the Bishop of Ely being named as Visitor in the 40th chapter of the statutes, the letter decreed that this chapter (*De Magistri, si res exigat, amotione*) should be repealed and annulled; and in conclusion, the Master was strictly enjoined to restrain and chastise all licence among the Fellows, and in so doing was promised the Royal aid and countenance.

Nov. 10,  
1710.

This sketch was transmitted through a private hand to Harley, amongst whose papers I find it in Bentley's own hand-writing<sup>15</sup>. The design was bold and enterprising: had he succeeded in obtaining the Royal *fiat*,

<sup>15</sup> This proposed draught of a Royal Letter was accompanied by the copy of a Letter actually sent to the College by King James I., upon a different subject, the language of which it imitates and parodies as closely as possible. They are found together among the Harleian papers in the British Museum.



all his plans would have been at once effected ; and he would have been delivered from the uneasiness and peril of this prosecution, as well as all future attacks upon his authority. But he was not aware of the cautious and balancing policy of the Minister, which would never have allowed him to enter so absolutely into the views of one party in a controversy.

This attempt at a *coup de main* does not appear ever to have been known to the prosecutors: but it is probable, from a comparison of dates, that Bishop Moore did obtain some intimation of the project. Dr. Bentley's communication was forwarded to the Minister by Mr. Thos. Sclater of Gray's Inn on the 10th of November, and on the 21st he received a letter from the Bishop, peremptorily requiring an answer to the articles preferred against him by the 18th day of the following month. Bentley at first declared his intention of appealing to the Convocation, of which he was a member, against the mandate of the Bishop: but no sooner was the design known in the College, than the Fellows subscribed a petition to the Convocation, praying that they would not interfere in the proceedings, and Mr. Ralph Blomer, a former member of the society, undertook to support their prayer with a smart oration against the Master<sup>16</sup>. Hereupon Bentley changed his plan of operations, and brought his case under the immediate cognizance of Government, by a petition to the Queen, which represented that her Majesty was the real Visitor of Trinity College; that the Bishop of Ely, in assuming the visitatorial style and functions, was invading the rights of the Crown; that the Master felt it his duty to resist all such illegal pretensions, and accordingly threw himself upon the Royal protection.

CHAP. X.  
1711.

Bishop Moore requires an answer to the articles.

Bentley petitions the Queen against the Bishop's jurisdiction.

<sup>16</sup> Rud's Manuscript Diary.



## CHAP. X.

1711.

The points now for the first time mooted by this petition are entirely of a legal nature, and seem to lie in a small compass ; but are in fact so nice and questionable, that they continued for a number of years to baffle the skill and ingenuity of the ablest English lawyers. It would perhaps not be possible to name a question upon which professional men have found it more difficult to arrive at a satisfactory decision, than that of the visitatorial jurisdiction over Trinity College. The case, however, when divested of all technical niceties, sounds to unlearned persons simple and intelligible.

Case of the  
Visitor of  
Trinity  
College.

Trinity College was founded by King Henry VIII. in the last year of his reign. That monarch, dying shortly afterwards, enacted no statutes for its government ; but his son Edward VI. did give a body of statutes, in the 46th chapter of which the Bishop of Ely is declared to be General Visitor of this Royal foundation. In the reign of Philip and Mary, a new code of statutes was prepared to supersede those of King Edward, in which the enactment respecting the Visitor was omitted : however, as they were never completed, nor ever received the Royal sanction, their history does not materially affect the case. Queen Elizabeth in the second year of her reign issued a new body of statutes, to which the Great Seal was affixed by Lord Keeper Bacon. This is the code by which the College has ever since been governed, and which all the Masters and Fellows have been sworn to obey. These ordinances being for the most part a revision of those of Philip and Mary, with such alterations as the establishment of the reformed religion rendered necessary, omit altogether the chapter *De Visitatore* ; however, in the 40th chapter, which we have already recited at length, they do incidentally style the Bishop of Ely *Visitor*, and enjoin that all



complaints against the Master shall be referred to his decision. Here then lay the difficulty. It was contended on one side that, the statutes of Elizabeth having superseded those of Edward, the appointment of the Bishop as Visitor was repealed, and the visitatorial power had reverted to the Crown as representative of the founder. On the other hand, the mention of the Bishop in the 40th chapter militated with this opinion, and seemed to imply that in the view of the compilers of those laws he still continued the Visitor. At all events it was maintained that the latter enactment gave him power to hear and decide complaints against the Head of the College, though his jurisdiction over the rest of the society might be disputed.

The practice appeared to confirm the opinion that the Crown was General Visitor. Several 'King's Letters,' altering, explaining, or adding to the statutes, had been from time to time accepted and obeyed by the College, as possessing an authority equal to the statutes themselves: while it could not be found that any Bishop of Ely, during the whole space of 150 years since the 2nd of Elizabeth, had exercised visitatorial jurisdiction. One solitary instance only could be produced previous to the present, in which an application had been made to a prelate of that see in the character of Visitor of the College; and that had come from no other than Bentley himself, who in the year 1703, upon some dispute respecting the extent of the Master's power at elections, had appealed to the late Bishop Patrick as Visitor. That prelate was ignorant that he possessed jurisdiction over Trinity College, and was unable to find in the records of his diocese any trace of such a claim on the part of his predecessors. But, a copy of the statutes being shown to him, he signified his opinion upon the point in dispute in a private letter to the Master, declaring



CHAP. X. however that he could give no positive judgment till  
1711. the case was judicially brought before him. This anecdote, as may be supposed, was frequently adduced against Bentley : but it proved nothing more than that he had formerly apprehended the Bishop to be General Visitor ; nor could it have any weight in a question, which was purely one of law, and was now to be submitted to the highest legal authorities <sup>17</sup>.

Petition referred to the Attorney and Solicitor General.

The Bishop's proceedings inhibited.

The Master's petition met with the immediate attention of her Majesty ; and a letter was written by Mr. Secretary St. John to the Attorney and Solicitor General, requiring them to examine the allegations, and to report their opinion thereon with all convenient speed : at the same time the Attorney General was directed to signify to the Bishop of Ely, that the Queen had taken the affair into her own cognizance, and enjoin his Lordship to stay all further proceedings till her Majesty's pleasure was known. Bishop Moore, in his reply, expressed much satisfaction that the question was referred to such able and impartial judges, and willingly submitted to her Majesty's pleasure in suspending the proceedings ; intimating at the same time his confidence in her wisdom and goodness, that she would never deprive him of any right belonging to his see.

Report of the Attorney and Solicitor General.

Sir Edward Northey and Sir Robert Raymond, who filled the offices of Attorney and Solicitor General, fixed the 2d of January, 1710-11, for hearing all parties concerned in this affair ; and many successive hearings took place at the Attorney's chambers, where Sir Peter King the future Lord Chancellor appeared, jointly with Mr. Miller, as counsel for the Fellows <sup>18</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> *Vindication of the Lord Bishop of Ely's Visitatorial jurisdiction over Trinity College*, 1732. p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Bentley's counsel on this occasion were Mr. Mead and Mr. Lutwich. *Rud's Diary*.



So numerous were the points for inquiry, and such the anxiety of the law-officers to obtain a clear view of the question, that five months elapsed before they made their report to the Government. This document contains a full, comprehensive, and impartial statement of every fact bearing upon the case, and is consequently of high importance; but in conclusion the Attorney and Solicitor deliver their own opinion with caution, and in reference not so much to the general question of the visitatorial power, as to the particular position in which Dr. Bentley was placed. Whether all the enactments of King Edward's statutes were repealed by those of Queen Elizabeth, they do not pronounce; but, instead of doing so, they take a dilemma, and intimate their belief that either by the old statutes, or by the 40th of Elizabeth's, the Master is subject to the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Ely: adding however that if either her Majesty or Dr. Bentley thought fit to contest this opinion, a prohibition to the Bishop's proceeding might be moved for in any of the courts of law, and thereupon the matter might be argued, and receive a judicial determination.

This disposal of the question by Sir E. Northey and Sir R. Raymond was by no means agreeable to the Master: since, instead of interposing the protection of the Crown in his favour, they only gave him permission to dispute, if he pleased, the authority of the Bishop by a litigation, and that too in opposition to their own declared opinion. He accordingly resolved to address himself directly to the Prime Minister, who had just recovered from the attempt made upon his life by the assassin Guiscard, and had within a few days been created Earl of Oxford and invested with the staff of Lord High Trea-

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1711.

May 29,  
1711.

Bentley applies directly to Lord Oxford.



CHAP. X. surer<sup>20</sup>. His letter is remarkable for the dexterity  
 1711. with which he contrives to identify his own cause  
 with that of the Queen's prerogative ; but it calls  
 more particularly for the reader's attention, as com-  
 prising that act of Bentley's life, for which he was  
 subjected to incessant obloquy, his adhesion to the  
 leader of a Tory ministry.

“ Right Honourable,

*Cotton House, July 12, 1711.*

“ After my hearty thanks to God for the wonderful preserva-  
 tion of your most valuable life from the stabs of an assassin, and my  
 sincere congratulation for your new station and honour, so long and  
 so well deserved ; I humbly crave leave to acquaint your Lordship,  
 that at last I have received from Mr. Attorney General the Report,  
 sealed up and directed to Mr. Secretary St. John, a copy of which,  
 as delivered to me, with the alterations made in it, is here inclosed.  
 Your Lordship, when you read it, will please to observe, that all the  
 facts alleged in my Petition are here confirmed ; that the statute of  
 Edward, which once constituted the Bishop of Ely Visitor, was  
 rejected and left out in the two later draughts of statutes, those of  
 Philip and Mary, and those of Elizabeth now only in force ; that  
 the Crown has for a century and half been in sole possession of the  
 visitatorial power ; that no Bishop of Ely all that while *ever heard*  
 of his being Visitor ; or ever once pretended to act as such till this  
 present Bishop. And as for the 40th statute of Elizabeth, which  
*obiter* and incidentally styles the Bishop of Ely *Visitor*, my counsel  
 largely proved, first, that it was *ipso facto* void ; and, secondly, that  
 supposing it to be now in force, it was in the power of the Crown to  
 vacate it at pleasure. To the latter of these assertions the report  
 comes up fully, and refutes the arguments of the Bishop's counsel,  
 as if it could not be repealed without the Bishop's consent. But as  
 to the former, it is trimmingly drawn up, and seems willing to skreen  
 the Bishop from blame or trouble for what is past. Nevertheless the  
 latter point alone is equivalent to both together ; for hereby it is

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<sup>20</sup> Bentley appears already to have made an effort to intercept and prevent  
 the report being presented, as soon as he learned that Sir Edward Northey  
 was in favour of the Bishop's claim. This was done through the medium  
 of Mr. Sclater, of Gray's Inn, whose letter to Mr. Harley, dated March 1,  
 is preserved ; but the attempt upon the life of the Minister on the 8th of  
 March, and his long illness which ensued, accounts for his non-interference.



clear, that if her Majesty will maintain her prerogative, it is but saying the word, and vacating the 40th statute : on the contrary, if she will abandon it to the Bishop, she may give him a new corroborating statute, if this be thought too weak. However, to give more satisfaction about both the points in question, I have permission to inclose the opinion of the learned Sir Nathaniel Lloyd, her Majesty's Advocate General and Vice Chancellor of Cambridge, which he is ready, if occasion were, to maintain in a public manner, by report or by pleading. He indeed humbly conceives, that even Mr. Attorney's present report is sufficient for her Majesty's prerogative, though the former point be waived : and it is so much the more so, by what I have heard last post, that those Fellows, the minor part of the whole Society, that are complainers against me, have subscribed a petition to her Majesty, that she will please to take this matter into her own hands. My Lord, I very readily close with this, and desire nothing more than that her Majesty would send down commissioners to examine into all matters upon the place, with full power to set every thing right, and to punish where the faults shall be found. I only beg and most humbly hope, that such persons may be nominated as are lovers of learning, and men of conscience and integrity, above the influence of party ; and then I fear not but I shall be both honourably acquitted, and merit the public approbation. I am easy under every thing, but loss of time, by detainment here in town, which hinders me from putting my last hand to my edition of Horace, and from doing myself the honour to inscribe it to your Lordship's great name ; which permission is most humbly asked and intreated by

“ Your Lordship's most obedient and obliged servant,

“ RICH. BENTLEY.”

It is far from my wish to palliate the discredit attached to every person who changes his party in contemplation of his interest or emolument. But it is my duty, as the biographer of Bentley, to state those points which distinguish his case from an ordinary instance of political tergiversation. In the first place, his ranging himself among the clients of the Lord Treasurer involved the sacrifice of no public principle which he had ever professed or entertained. Lord Oxford had hitherto always been an upholder of Revolution principles, and of the Protestant Succession ; and it was not till some time after this period

His change  
of party.



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that even a suspicion was entertained of his inclinations in favour of the Pretender. Besides, although now supported by the Tories, he had until the last two or three years acted with Lord Godolphin's administration. Still it is undeniable that Bentley was an adherent and panegyrist of the discarded ministry immediately before their ejection; but in this transfer of his attachment to their successful rivals, he broke no engagement, and deserted no benefactor. He sought not preferment, but protection against what he deemed the efforts of a conspiracy: and having reason to believe that the Bishop of Ely was disposed to favour the views of his prosecutors, he thought himself justifiable, at a crisis where his all was at stake, in having recourse to the only quarter capable of shielding him; particularly as fortune seemed opportunely to have opened him a door to such powerful protection. It rests with the reader to give whatever weight he thinks proper to these suggestions. I have only to add that, having once formed this resolution, he could not have fixed upon a patron to whom his forthcoming edition of Horace might be addressed with more propriety. The Earl of Oxford was himself a literary man, fond of the society of scholars, had collected one of the noblest libraries in Europe, and possessed both the power and disposition to tread in the steps of Mæcenas.

Question of  
the Visita-  
tion of the  
College sub-  
mitted to  
the Lord  
Keeper and  
Queen's  
counsel.

Bentley's communication met with immediate attention from the Minister: he directed that the report of the Attorney and Solicitor General should be laid before the Lord Keeper, Sir Simon Harcourt, and all the Crown lawyers; to whom certain questions were propounded as to the legality of her Majesty taking the whole visitation of Trinity College into her own hands; questions obviously suggested by the Master's letter, and implying plainly enough the wish of the



Government to adopt his view of the subject. At the same time Mr. Secretary St. John wrote to Bishop Moore, signifying her Majesty's pleasure that he should further stay all proceedings on a business which she deemed of so much importance, until answers to these questions had been obtained. CHAP. X.  
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Bentley had now passed nine months at his town residence, instructing his lawyers, improving his interest at court, and preparing for the struggle in which his reputation and fortunes were involved : and it was not till the month of June that he was able to return to his College and his books, with a determination of completing the long-promised edition of Horace. We have already adverted to the causes which occasioned the work to hang so long upon his hands. The various and busy transactions of his College government not only occupied his time, but distracted his mind from a steady pursuit of any literary object ; and the necessity to which he had reduced himself, of supporting in his notes all the emendations of the already printed text, was a continual obstacle to his progress ; for he must have been led by consideration and inquiry to distrust some of those ingenious conjectures, which had given new readings to Horace. A two-fold motive now urged him to despatch : a wish to appear before the public in a different and more favourable character, and at the same time to offer his homage to the Lord Treasurer. He accordingly betook himself to the task with that indefatigable application of which his constitution was capable, and summoned into action those stores of learning, which never fail to astonish as well as to instruct the reader. It seems probable, that in the ensuing five months the largest portion of his notes was written, and sent to the press as they came from his hands ; and I apprehend that his exertions during

Bentley  
completes  
his Horace.



CHAP. X. this period have scarcely been equalled in the history  
1711. of literature.

Dedication  
to the Earl  
of Oxford.

The important affair of the dedication was first to be settled in a way agreeable to the great patron to whom the work was inscribed. Bentley had discovered that the Lord Treasurer was not exempt from the pride of ancestry. The Earl of Oxford and Earl Mortimer, though indebted for rank and power to his talents and address, was anxious that the world should know that his ancestors were related to the Veres and Mortimers of former centuries, and that his family estate in Herefordshire had been in possession of the Harleys since the reign of Edward the First. Bentley accordingly applied to Mr. Thomas Bateman, who seems to have been private secretary to the Lord Treasurer, for particular information upon this momentous topic; and four letters addressed to him by that gentleman, in the month of November, prove the solicitude of the Premier that his heraldic glories should be fully and accurately displayed.

The publi-  
cation.

It was on the 8th of December 1711, that Bentley put the last hand to his great work; having thus exceeded the precept of Horace, by keeping it to the *tenth* year after its commencement. The day which gave to the world what was intended as a restored copy of Horace, was, either by accident or design, the birth-day of the poet himself—*Sext. Idus Decembres*<sup>20</sup>: a circumstance which he did not fail to mention as an auspicious coincidence for the birth of his book. The dedication, which contains nine quarto pages of elaborate panegyric, has subjected its author to the charges of servility and adulation: but candour must allow that the fault was rather that of the age than of the scholar, who, if he dedicated

Adulatory  
style of the  
Dedication.

<sup>20</sup> *Vita Horatii Flacci, Auctore C. Suetonio Tranquillo.*



to Lord Oxford at all, could hardly have avoided addressing him in the language of flattery. Good taste had not yet abolished the fashion which demanded from every dedicator, whether classical or vernacular, the most unsparing praise that language could supply. Even at the very time of which we are speaking, the volumes of the Spectator, the reputed purifier of our national taste, were inscribed to the leaders of the Whig party in terms of equal or greater adulation ; although some of them were worse subjects for panegyric than Harley, and their praises were not veiled in the decent obscurity of a learned language<sup>21</sup>. Bentley's dedication, were it the speech of a public orator in an University, presenting a distinguished nobleman to a degree, would probably meet with unqualified admiration. The difficult affair of a long pedigree is managed with great adroitness ; and the topics of Harley having filled the Speaker's chair in three parliaments, his magnificent library, his patronage of scholars, the attempt made upon his life by an emissary of France, his measures of finance, and the projected peace which was to give tranquillity to the world, are all exhibited in oratorical display. In drawing the parallel between Horace's patron and his own, the Doctor makes a palpable allusion to his recent change of party, by remarking that the poet was not less in favour with Mæcenas from his having once served under the banners of Brutus and Cassius.

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The 'Preface to the Reader' is couched in such arrogant terms as exposed Bentley to unceasing ridicule and censure ; and his character for presumption has been established by those few pages, more than by all the other productions of his pen. He wrote as a person fully aware of the reputation which he had

Arrogant  
language of  
the Preface.

<sup>21</sup> They are Lord Somers, Lord Halifax, the Right Hon. Henry Boyle, the Duke of Marlborough, *the Earl of Wharton*, and the Earl of Sunderland.



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acquired for learning and genius, and as if he were resolved to follow the Horatian precept, *sume superbiam quæsitam meritis*. After explaining the plan of his edition, and his reasons for confining himself to the restoration of the text from manuscripts and conjecture, he describes the various qualifications requisite for the critic who undertakes this highest and most perilous department; but in such terms as leave no doubt that he himself lays claim to them all, and that too in their greatest perfection. In addition to a complete knowledge of all Greek and Roman authors, which he ranks as the lowest and meanest requisite for the verbal critic, he says, *Est et peracri insuper judicio opus; est sagacitate et ἀγχινοία; est, ut de Aristarcho olim prædicabant, divinandi quadam peritia et μαντικὴ: quæ nulla laborandi pertinacia vitæve longinquitate acquiri possunt, sed naturæ solius munere nascendique felicitate contingunt*. This implied assumption of the attributes of Aristarchus fastened upon Bentley that appellation, which had already been sometimes given to him; and he continued to receive it, either with a serious or ironical meaning, according as it was applied by a friend or an enemy. He claims credit, as usual, for the rapid and extemporaneous manner in which his annotations had been despatched; and for the truth of this he appeals to the testimony of all his intimates at Cambridge: but the language is arrogant and invidious, and seems almost to challenge that severity of examination, which his edition of Horace has experienced beyond all parallel in literary history: “*Qualiacunque vero hæc sunt, æstivis tantum mensibus (ita tamen ut uno alteroque biennio fuerint prorsus intermissa) et primo impetu ac calore sine lima curisve secundis descripta, sic madida fere charta (ut nemini hic meorum non compertissimum est) ad typographos deferebantur.—Sic tamen, uti spero,*



*ut nec sermonis puritatem*<sup>22</sup>, *nec ordinis lumen, neque rationum vim et perspicuitatem vel in his αὐτοσχεδίοις desideres.*" CHAP. X.  
1711.

The preface gives an account of the various manuscripts of Horace, which the Doctor had examined, or obtained collations of: it also states his reasons for restoring the orthography of the Augustan age in many words, as *volgus*, *divom*, *inpius*, *conpesco*, which, although written in the ancient manuscripts of the poet according to the original form, were universally altered in the printed copies. In this he followed the example of Heinsius's Virgil, as well as in printing the accusatives plural in *is*, where the genitives end in *ium*; as *urbis*, *auris*, *omnis*. He likewise adduces the authority of the best copies, and of the old grammarians, for terming the lyrical compositions of Horace not *Odæ*, but *Carmina*; the two books of Satires, *Sermones*, not *Satiræ*; and each separate Satire, *Ecloga*.

Bentley's preface concludes with his opinion respecting the chronology of the works of Horace. This was a subject upon which Dacier and Masson, in their respective lives of this poet, had bestowed great pains, and persuaded themselves that they could fix the particular years in which the several pieces were written. According to the theory of both these critics, Horace must have been employed upon his Odes, Satires, and Epistles at the same periods of his life, and he must have published his works not in whole books, but in separate poems. Besides, they differ

Chronology  
of Horace's  
different  
works.

<sup>22</sup> It happened most unfortunately for the Doctor, that in this very expression he exposed himself to a charge of impure Latinity. His acute and bitter enemy, John Ker, observes, that the word *puritas* is found only in a writer of recent age and poor authority. Vid. *Quaternæ Epistolæ*, &c. p. 23. But even supposing the word itself to be defensible, the phrase *sermonis puritas* will still remain an Anglicism.



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from each other in their arrangements, and a sharp controversy had lately taken place between them upon their respective systems. Bentley condemns the performances of both, at the same time that he gives them full credit for their industry. His opinion is that each book of Horace was published collectively in its present form; that his earliest work, the first book of Satires, was written within the 26th, 27th, and 28th years of his age; the second book of Satires in his 31st, 32nd, and 33rd years; the Epodes in his 34th and 35th years; that he did not commence his Odes till he had reached his 36th year, and that the three first books were composed between that and the age of 43. The first book of Epistles he conceives to have occupied his 46th and 47th years; then the fourth book of Odes and *Carmen Seculare* the years 49, 50, and 51; finally, he judges that the Art of Poetry and second book of Epistles, the latest of the poet's compositions, cannot be more definitively fixed, than as having been produced in the last six years of his life, which extended to his 57th year. For the verification of this theory he appeals to the internal evidence found in the various compositions of the poet. An attention to the particulars of Horace's life is essentially necessary to the full understanding of his works; and every careful reader is competent to form a judgment of the correctness of Bentley's limitations. It is probable that they will be deemed, upon the whole, to approximate to the truth as nearly as any scheme of the kind can be admitted, but that some exceptions must be allowed, proceeding from such insertions and alterations (particularly in his earlier books) as can hardly fail to be made by a poet, subsequently to their first publication. Gesner, a diligent observer, declares in the preface of his edition, that he could not discover in the Satires any thing which overset the



theory of the Doctor. This subject is not devoid of CHAP. X.  
1711.  
interest: as Horace was an author for about thirty years, it may be curious to trace the alteration of taste which took place within that period. At all events it is satisfactory to remark, that the licentious parts of his writings appear to have been principally confined to his earlier productions<sup>23</sup>.

A remarkable feature in the preface is, that Bentley expresses his regret for more than twenty of his emendations. But he compliments himself too profusely for his candour in this voluntary confession of error: and the self-condemnation of so many of his alterations was not a favourable omen of the reception which the reformed text would experience<sup>24</sup>.

This publication had been long and anxiously expected, and its appearance excited much sensation and surprise. There were found between seven and eight hundred alterations of the common readings of Horace; all of which, contrary to the general practice of classical editors, were introduced into the text. Scholars, having been familiar from their childhood with the works of this poet, were unwilling to believe that they had been all their lives mistaken in those passages which had afforded them unceasing gratification. Many indeed of Bentley's readings are those of old editions and manuscripts; but the greater part are the fruit of his own conjecture, supported by arguments always plausible and ingenious, and not unfrequently convincing. A person, who at first

Alterations  
in the text  
of Horace.

<sup>23</sup> Bentley's scheme of the *Tempora Horatiana* is condemned by Mitscherlich, the Leipsic editor; but he is a person of little or no authority; in this case he appeals to the Life of Horace by Jani, an abridgment of Masson's, one of those productions to correct the errors of which Bentley's theory was composed.

<sup>24</sup> This occurs only in the Cambridge edition. In the reprints at Amsterdam those readings do not appear, nor is there any mention of them in the preface.



CHAP. X. rejects his correction and declares a preference for the  
1711. old reading, will sometimes be surprised to find his opinion changed on perusing the note, and be compelled to acknowledge the justice of the emendation: and this is a result of his labours which the Doctor anticipated, not without exultation. But while some of his new readings are fairly established, a larger proportion must be confessed to be dubious. Many of his changes are unnecessary, others harsh and improbable. He shows a propensity to confine the limits of poetical licence too closely, and thus to reduce the language of Horace into prose. But, when he defends his corrections by analogy, he brings forth the riches of his learning as from an inexhaustible mine; and the reader, whether convinced or not respecting the particular point under discussion, is almost sure to find his knowledge increased: and hence it will be observed that the very errors of Bentley are instructive.

Faults in  
the notes.

In the notes of this edition there are several particulars justly censurable; though perhaps they have received more reproach than they deserve. The most prominent is the tone of authority in which our editor issues his critical decrees, as the absolute dictator of literature. Nor is this all; we find throughout the work an arrogant style, and an assumed superiority over all other commentators: such claims, whether just or not, the world is seldom disposed to concede to the pretensions of a writer himself. The Doctor is also too prone to the childish vanity of claiming merit for improvements and plausible conjectures in cases where the same had already been suggested by others; adding that he had discovered such or such a reading before he observed that the same had been proposed by some old editor or commentator. However, neither in these instances, nor in some others



where he omits to name the first propounder of his emendations, is there any reason to question his veracity, as some of his enemies have done with unpardonable asperity. A great part of his notes were composed in haste, and while his attention was more exerted to confirm his readings by analogy than to examine the writings of others; so that he could hardly fail sometimes to appropriate emendations, in ignorance that they had been made by his predecessors. But the anxious and ostentatious claim which he is for ever making to the praise of originality, being unworthy of a man of his undisputed eminence, justly exposed him to attack. There is another fault arising from his being himself the general subject of his own panegyric; his language, though lucid and perspicuous, frequently assumes an air of rhetorical flourish by no means consistent with sound taste.

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1711.

Notwithstanding the egotism of his critical discussions, Bentley can seldom be considered unjust towards other commentators. To Nicholas Heinsius, Torrentius, Janus Rutgersius, as well as to his contemporary Baxter, he generally allows fair credit, though not unaccompanied with a display of his own superior sagacity. Some other critics, as Cruquius, Marcilius, Barthius, Daniel Heinsius, and Dacier, he frequently treats with contemptuous language; which even when merited would better have been forborne. But Gronovius is the only individual against whom he launches into wrathful invective: that veteran, who had passed a long literary life in provoking and insulting the most distinguished of his contemporaries, was now again made to feel the weight of Bentley's resentment. The bitterness of his late publication on Menander, *Infamia Emendationum*, had deprived him of all claim to quarter; and accordingly he is held up to odium and contempt in the longest and most

Bentley's  
treatment  
of other  
scholars.

Gronovius.



CHAP. X.  
1712.

elaborate note in the book, that on V. 441. of the Art of Poetry, *Et male tornatos incudi reddere versus*, in which Bentley substitutes for *tornatos* his own conjectural reading *ter natos*. This emendation he had proposed many years before in his notes on Callimachus; but, although it met with unqualified approbation from Grævius, it was far from satisfying the generality of the learned, who thought the common reading not only defensible, but preferable to that of our critic<sup>25</sup>. Among others, Gronovius having taken occasion, in his Aulus Gellius, to condemn the alteration, Bentley rouses himself like an offended lion, and devotes some pages, almost at the conclusion of his work, to justify this reading, and to chastise and crush his old adversary. The majority of scholars will probably side with Gronovius, in rejecting the Doctor's *ter natos*; but whoever turns to his defence of this alteration, wherein he puts forth all his strength, will be amazed at the learning and ingenuity, which almost charm the assent in opposition to previous conviction<sup>26</sup>.

Numerous small publications censuring and ridiculing Bentley's Horace.

This book was, it must be confessed, unlike any edition of a Latin author ever before given to the world. It immediately called forth a host of petty adversaries, who assailed the great critic in small anonymous publications. All these attacks were made with the shafts of ridicule, to which parts of Bentley's book, particularly the dedication and the preface, are undeniably exposed. The vein of malice

<sup>25</sup> Grævius in his letter to Bentley, written Nov. 23, 1702, about seven years after he had been acquainted with this emendation, says, *Dudum sæpius harum rerum non imperitis laudavi non conjecturam, sed emendationem tuam certissimam in loco Horatii ex Arte, quam prodidisti in Notis ad Callimachum. Eam qui videt et non probat, is in his literis cæcior est quavis talpa. Quid enim torno cum incude?*

<sup>26</sup> The common reading is vindicated by many scholars, who are referred to by Mr. Kidd in a note on the lines in his edition of Horace.



conspicuous in them all shows that their authors had conceived a personal dislike for the editor of Horace. One of them, entitled *Horatius Reformatus*, a little pamphlet of 24 pages, contains all the peculiar readings of Bentley's text, with the common readings in an opposite column : this was an eminently malicious contrivance ; since it left the innovations without that defence which alone could render them palatable. An ironical dedication to Dr. Bentley states that this publication was requisite for his own credit as well as the public good ; inasmuch as it would enable numbers to enjoy the reformed Horace, to whom his edition was inaccessible from the magnitude of its price ; adding with a sneer that there was no necessity for notes, since his authority was so great, that the world would be satisfied to take the innovations upon his *dictum*<sup>27</sup>. Another sixpenny tract consists of Bentley's dedication to Lord Oxford, with a literal English translation ; to which are prefixed his verses addressed four years before to Lord Halifax, along with a burlesque version<sup>28</sup>. The professed object of this publication was to expose the Doctor's servility ; it was followed by a similar translation of the preface<sup>29</sup>. A third was a small Latin tract of no merit whatever, called *Aristarchus Ampullans in Curis Horatianis*, the author of which adopts from De Pauw the title of *Philargyrius Cantabrigiensis*, as insulting to Bentley : it contains nothing more than complaints of the presumption of the critic, and the liberties taken with the

<sup>27</sup> HORATIUS REFORMATUS: sive Emendationes Omnes, quibus Editio Benteiana a vulgaribus distinguitur, summa fide in unum collectæ. Lond. Bowyer. 1712.

<sup>28</sup> " Dr. Bentley's Dedication of Horace, translated. To which is added, A Poem in Latin and English, inscribed to the Right Honourable the Lord Halifax, written by the Reverend Dr. Bentley." London.

<sup>29</sup> *The Life of Horace: with Dr. Bentley's Preface. Latin and English.* London.



CHAP. X. text of Horace. A fourth squib is called 'The Life  
 1712. and Conversation of Richard Bentley, in Latin and  
 English : ' it consists principally of scraps from Bentley's notes rendered into vulgar English ; a ludicrous and gross banter, giving an account of his birth, parentage, and school education, with all the insolence of low scurrility. Another assumes the title of 'Five Extraordinary Letters,' sneering at the editor of Horace, in 20 pages of wit and buffoonery : the topics of this *jeu d'esprit* are the same as of the others, and would serve as well for an attack on any verbal critics, whom the author compares to 'corn-cutters.' From several allusions to Bentley's College government, it seems that this assailant was one of his adversaries in Trinity <sup>30</sup>. The sixth writer who attacked our critic's Horace, devoted more time and trouble to the task than all the other scoffers put together : his first publication appeared with this title, 'The Odes of Horace in Latin and English ; with a translation of Dr. Bentley's Notes. To which are added Notes upon Notes ; done in the Benteleian Style and Manner. Part I. To be continued. 1712.' The translation of the Odes is executed in poetical measure, in a rapid and off-hand style, but not without considerable spirit and cleverness. The version of Bentley's notes professes to be made in literal English, but is in truth a mere travesty ; adopting such vulgar phraseology as would give a ludicrous character to any book that ever was written. This I presume to have been the attractive part of the performance, which caused it to amuse the public as much as it undoubtedly must have done.

Translation  
 of the Odes  
 and Bentley's  
 Notes.

Notes upon  
 Notes.

<sup>30</sup> *Five Extraordinary Letters supposed to be writ to Dr. B . . . . y, upon his Edition of Horace, and some other matters of great Importance.* London. 1712. The motto of this squib, *Ecce iterum Crispinus, et est mihi sæpe vocandus Ad partes*, implies that the author had already been Bentley's adversary.



The 'Notes upon Notes' are miserably vapid, and their unvaried sneer tiresome and nauseous. Nevertheless the author found encouragement to pursue his task of exhibiting the Doctor's Horace in a ridiculous light through twenty-four successive numbers <sup>31</sup>. CHAP. X.  
1712.

These attacks from the light artillery of wit probably gave little or no uneasiness to our great critic.

<sup>31</sup> Of these 24 numbers, 17 were published in 1712, and 7 in 1713: probably one appeared every fortnight, containing 36 pages, at the price of sixpence. They were then collected in two volumes with the following title page: "*The Odes, Epodes, and Carmen Seculare of Horace, in Latin and English; with a Translation of Dr. Ben-ley's Notes. To which are added Notes upon Notes. In 24 parts complete. By several hands. 1713.*" Perhaps I shall give the reader no bad specimen of the wit and malice of this publication, by copying a few mottoes of the respective parts:

—— *molitur inepte.*

—— *carmina non prius*  
*Audita Musarum Sacerdos*  
*Virginibus puerisque cantat.*

—— *ibimus, ibimus*  
*Utcunque præcedes, supremum*  
*Carpere iter comites parati.*

—— *operosa parvus*  
*Carmina fingit.*

—— *placet impares*  
*Formas atque animos sub juga ahenea*  
*Sævo mittere cum joco.*

*Tandem nequitiae fige modum tuæ,*  
*Famosisque laboribus.*

—— *tu, simul obligasti*  
*Perfidum Musis caput, enitescis*  
*Pulchrior multo, juvenumque prodis*  
*Publica cura.*

There appears once to have been a notion that the author was no other than Bentley's old enemy Dr. King. A copy of the book, in an old binding, shown to me by Mr. Evans the eminent bookseller of Pall-Mall, is lettered *King's Horace*. But Dr. W. King was dead some time before the completion of the work. The writer might have been another person of the same name.



CHAP. X. But there came forward another antagonist, who  
 1712. levelled at him a blow calculated to inflict a deeper  
 John Ker. wound. This was Mr. John Ker, the teacher of a  
 dissenting academy, who had a few years before written a book on the structure of Latin, a subject with which he was accurately and minutely conversant. Having some previous acquaintance with Bentley, he solicited his interest with Lord Sunderland, the Secretary of State, to obtain the Queen's privilege for that publication, which was to be dedicated to her Majesty. This favour the Doctor obtained for him; and also invited him to his table at Cotton House, where according to his own statement he was handsomely entertained, and enjoyed the still higher gratification of learned conversation. On this occasion Bentley pronounced the word *equidem* to be joined only with the first person singular in the best and oldest Latin writers, (whereas in Ker's book it was allowed to be read with a third person,) and said that examination would confirm this rule. The schoolmaster having his attention called to this point, lost no time in collecting instances of *equidem* used with a second and third person by writers prior to the Augustan age, and within two days waited upon Bentley armed with his authorities, and not doubting but the Doctor would be pleased and thankful for the information.

Offended at Bentley. The visit happened to be ill-timed: Mr. Ker found him just setting out to dine at the Archbishop of Canterbury's, and already on the outside of his door: he entered however upon different topics, to all of which Bentley replied in a harsh and contemptuous tone, utterly unlike his manner two days before; and proceeded along the street with the determined step of one who is apprehensive that the least delay may make him too late for his engagement. The schoolmaster accompanied or rather followed him for about



a hundred yards, and then concluded this unpromising interview by taking his leave; but the other did not even turn to acknowledge the valediction. This is Ker's account of the offence: but, as it was widely different from his former treatment, we must conclude that Bentley was disgusted at his behaviour, or deemed his conversation obtrusive. This slight however excited Ker's resentment; and his vexation had been rankling for four years, when the publication of Horace gave him an opportunity beyond his hopes of taking revenge upon the supercilious and mighty critic. Bentley was by no means a purist in his Latinity. His style, though sometimes redundant, is easy, flowing, and perspicuous; and his command of words and phrases is great: but his compositions were generally too hasty to allow him to consult authorities: accordingly, his memory sometimes deceived him, and expressions may be found which, although in the tone of classical phraseology, are such as an examination of the original authors will not strictly justify. This blemish was no sooner observed by Ker, whose daily occupation consisted in detecting such slips, than he resolved to discharge his bile, which had been so long concocting, by the exhibition of Dr. Bentley in a light peculiarly mortifying to a scholar. A peevish and splenetic disposition, aggravated by poverty and neglect through a long life, made him enjoy the task; and, in two Latin epistles addressed to the Doctor, he exposed his boastful pretensions, and the unauthorised expressions in his Dedication and Preface, with all imaginable contumely. Whatever might have been the feelings of Dr. Bentley, he was too wise to give consequence to an obscure adversary by taking any notice of this effusion <sup>32</sup>.

CHAP. X.  
1712.

Defects in  
Bentley's  
Latinity.

<sup>32</sup> The title of Ker's book is *Quaternæ Epistolæ: Prima et Secunda ad Richardum Bentleium; Tertia ad Illustrissimum Virum Ezekiëlem Spanhe-*



CHAP. X.  
1712.

Le Clerc's  
review of  
Bentley's  
Horace.

In enumerating the critiques which the appearance of Bentley's Horace called forth, we must not omit one written by his crest-fallen adversary John Le Clerc. This professor of universal learning, although he had been seduced by vanity into the disastrous undertaking of his Menander, had too much sense not to perceive how greatly it had damaged his reputation; and he lost no time in adopting measures to retrieve his credit. In the year 1711 he put forth an apologetic account of his life and writings, adding some letters of Grævius and Spanheim as testimonies of the estimation in which he had been held by the greatest scholars of the age. He now resolved to meet praise of another description, by candour and forbearance towards the critic from whom he had experienced so severe a fall. Accordingly there appeared in his *Bibliothèque Choisie* a critique, which was immediately translated and published as a pamphlet, entitled 'Mr. Le Clerc's Judgment and Censure of Dr. Bentley's Horace.' It is written in a liberal tone, and, considering the fate of his own Menander, must be acknowledged to be honourable to the reviewer. He admits unequivocally the learning, ingenuity, and other qualifications of the editor, and declares that he abstains for personal reasons from a particular examination of his new readings; adding however some just and sensible observations upon the difficulty and danger

*mium; Quarta ad Ludovicum Fridericum Bonetum.* 1713. The two letters to Spanheim and his nephew Bonet, the Prussian minister at the English Court, are short and unimportant. Another cause for Ker's wrath against Bentley discovers itself in p. 113 of his book. The Bill just passed 'to prevent the growth of schism,' placed him, as a dissenting schoolmaster, in some jeopardy; and it was suggested by a friend, that the Doctor, being intimate with the great, and acquainted with his circumstances, was likely to become an informer against him. This suggestion, improbable and absurd as it was, obtained his credence, and made him regard Bentley as his dangerous enemy.



which attend alterations in the text of a Latin au- CHAP. X.  
thor <sup>33</sup>. 1712.

In the meantime Dr. Bentley continued to receive Atterbury.  
letters from distinguished scholars in this and other countries, complimenting him upon his noble edition of Horace. The reader will be interested to see that of his old adversary Dr. Atterbury, who was now become Dean of Christ-church, not only on account of the celebrity of the writer, but for the curious acknowledgment which it contains. It is to be observed that these two antagonists, being raised to the headships of the first Colleges in their respective Universities, annually passed some days in each other's society, at the examination and election of Westminster scholars to be sent to Christ-church and Trinity.

“ Reverend Sir,

*Chelsea, Apr. 19, 1712.*

“ I was prevented in my intention of wayting on you, by an account which Dr. Potter gave me, that on that very day you had

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<sup>33</sup> Le Clerc observes, that sometimes expressions displease the reader, because he does not happen to recollect similar ones ; yet that by research they may perhaps be discovered to be justifiable. Another important remark is, that poets of all ages and countries take liberties in their phrases, which must not therefore be hastily pronounced spurious because the same are not to be discovered elsewhere.

Shortly before this publication Le Clerc had experienced some mortifying proofs of his impaired reputation. He had applied to succeed Limborch in the professorship of theology among the Remonstrants at Amsterdam, but was rejected, though upon his own ground, and by his own party, who elected Callenberg an Arminian preacher of Rotterdam. His failure was celebrated by a multitude of satires in prose and verse, in which his old enemy Burman took a prominent part. Bentley received accounts of this matter both from Burman and Kuster : the former tells it with high exultation ; the latter, who had a regard for Le Clerc, with evident concern. Kuster, who was himself just returned from England, writes thus : “ Clericus nuper in gratiam plane redire tecum videbatur, cum ipsi dicerem te saluti ejus ad me bibisse. Scio equidem te minime curare, quo loco apud eum sis : sed tamen, cum et ipse plurimos habeat amicos, quique eum magni faciant, præstat eum habere amicum, quam inimicum.”



CHAP. X. left London. My busyness was to have thanked you for that noble  
 1712. present of your new edition of Horace, which you were pleased to  
 make me. I deferr'd doing it till I had perus'd the whole work, and  
 could with assurance say (as I now can) that 'tis every way equal to  
 y<sup>e</sup> expectation raised of it. I am indebted to you, Sir, for the great  
 pleasure and instruction I have received from that excellent perform-  
 ance; though at y<sup>e</sup> same time I cannot but own to you the uneasy-  
 ness I felt when I found how many things in Horace there were,  
 which, after thirty years' acquaintance with him, I did not under-  
 stand. I hope to meet you at the Westm<sup>r</sup>. election; but could not  
 defer my acknowledgments so long.

“ I am, Reverend Sir,

“ Your obliged and most faithful humble servant,

“ FR. ATTERBURY.”

“ *To the Reverend Dr. Bentley,  
 Master of Trinity College in Cambridge.*”

New edition  
 at Amster-  
 dam.

The favourable reception of Bentley's Horace is  
 proved by the fact of another edition being almost  
 immediately called for. This he chose to publish at  
 Amsterdam, in consequence of the cheapness of paper  
 and printing in the United Provinces. The second  
 edition is in all respects an improvement upon the  
 first; the notes are placed at the foot of each page;  
 the *addenda* are incorporated in their proper places;  
 some hasty and crude conjectures are omitted; and  
 the work is enriched with a copious index of the words  
 and phrases of Horace; being that originally made  
 by Treter, afterwards enlarged and new-modelled by  
 Aveman, and finally adapted to this edition and  
 Bentley's readings by Verburg, subsequently the  
 editor of Cicero <sup>34</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> This Index of Thomas Treter, a Pole, was first printed at Antwerp,  
 by Plantin, in 1575. Daniel Aveman's Index appeared at Brunswick in  
 1667.



CHAPTER XI.

*Opinions of the Crown Lawyers respecting the Visitor of Trinity College—Bentley's prosecutors in private communication with the Lord Treasurer—His design to compose the differences—Suicide of Professor Sike—Election of Hebrew and Greek Professors—Dr. Stubbe turned out of the Vice-mastership—Queen's prohibition taken off from the Bishop of Ely—Bentley presents to the Queen an Address from the University of Cambridge—Vote of the Senate directed against Bentley—Language held by his friends in his favour—Clarke—Jurin—Cotes—Publication of Newton's Principia—Thomas Bentley's Horace—Collins' Discourse of Freethinking—Replies by Hoadly, Whiston, Swift, Berkely, Ibbott—Bentley's Remarks on Freethinking—Dr. Hare publishes the Clergyman's Thanks to Phileleutherus—Second Part of Bentley's Remarks—Disgraceful behaviour of Collins—Bentley gives offence to Lord Bolingbroke—He replies to the Articles of Accusation—Attempts to terminate the proceedings—The Bishop's Assessors—Trial at Ely House—The Bishop's opinion unfavourable to the Master—Sentence of Deprivation prepared—Death of Bishop Moore—Death of Queen Anne.*

THE progress made by the Fellows of Trinity College in the prosecution of their Master was not greater in 1712 than in the two preceding years. The Crown lawyers, to whom the questions relative to the visitatorial jurisdiction had been referred, after more than seven months' deliberation at length came to a distinct opinion, that they deemed the Crown to be General Visitor of the College; but that the Bishop of Ely possessed, under the 40th statute, the power of hearing and deciding upon the charges against the Master; adding that it was in the power of her Majesty to alter the visitatorial authority, provided such alteration met with the acceptance of the College. This opinion is subscribed by the eminent names of Sir Thomas Powys, Sir Edward Northey,

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1712.

Opinion of the Crown lawyers on the Visitor of Trinity College. Jan. 9, 1711-12.



CHAP. XI.  
1712.

Sir Joseph  
Jekyl.

Sir Robert Raymond, Serjeant Hooper, Serjeant Conyers, Mr. Lutwych, and Mr. Ward: but, upon one essential particular it is opposed by the no less valued opinion of Sir Joseph Jekyl; who states his reasons for thinking that the visitatorial power, having been once vested in the Bishop of Ely by King Edward's statutes, was not revoked by those of Queen Elizabeth; particularly as the latter, in the 40th chapter, actually make mention of him as Visitor; consequently, that in his view of the question, the Bishop continued General Visitor of the College. The division of opinion on this point, though highly momentous to the Society, did not affect the immediate question of Bentley's case, since both parties agreed that the jurisdiction in a complaint against the Master rested with the Bishop. As there now appeared no further objection to the exercise of his functions, it was expected that the Royal prohibition would be immediately taken off, and the Bishop allowed to administer justice in this long suspended cause. However, the interdict still continued; and it was currently believed that the hand of power was extended to screen the Doctor, through the influence of Lady Masham, and Secretary St. John. But the true state of the case is discovered from certain letters preserved in the collection of Lord Oxford.

Private  
communi-  
cation of  
the Fellows  
with the  
Lord Treas-  
urer.

The prosecutors had found access to the Lord Treasurer's private ear, through the medium of their late representative the Earl of Anglesey, and were encouraged by the assurances of that Minister that he would procure them redress for all their grievances, and settle the disturbed and afflicted College. As early as June 1711, we find that the Vice-master Dr. Stubbe was in communication with him; and from subsequent letters it appears that the leaders of the prosecution were induced to delay their proceedings,



in reliance upon the powerful assistance of the Pre-  
mier. It is curious to observe that he acted in this  
business precisely upon that temporizing and pro-  
crastinating policy, for which we find his administra-  
tion condemned even by his own adherents. To  
negotiate with opposite parties, and to persuade each  
to rely upon his management, seems to have been his  
universal resource in all difficulties. By this method  
he procured both the Whigs and the October Club to  
acquiesce for some time in the measures of his govern-  
ment; and subsequent discoveries have proved that  
he was engaged in secret communications at the  
same moment, with the Pretender and with the court  
of Hanover; and was thus encouraging both houses  
to reckon upon his assistance in mounting the throne  
of Great Britain.

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In the present instance however there is no reason  
to suspect the Lord Treasurer of insincerity, or of  
intending to betray either party to whom he promised  
his countenance and assistance. His undoubted in-  
tention was to compose the quarrel, and then to take  
such measures as might prevent the recurrence of the  
same state of affairs in the society. As the easiest  
method of effecting this purpose, he wished the Master  
and Fellows to concur in submitting all differences to  
the arbitration of the Crown<sup>1</sup>. He possibly expected

Design of  
the Lord  
Treasurer.

<sup>1</sup> This appears, from several circumstances, to have been the Lord Treasurer's object; particularly from a correspondence between the Master and Bateman, a person in the confidence of Lord Oxford, who had written to Bentley for an account of the state of things in the College in Dec. 1712, and had received from him a long and particular letter; to which, after a communication with the Minister, he replies: "I cannot but wish what you mention at the close of it may be soon effected, viz. the unanimous reference of it to her Majesty, and the submitting the whole to her settlement and determination. This will be a publick service, and may entitle any one to favour who influences in it, and brings it about. I doubt not but you'll believe whom I wish to congratulate upon it, and that I am your affectionate faithful servant, T. B."



CHAP. XI. that the pique and animosity mixed up in this dispute  
 1712. would in a short time subside, and a sense of duty and interest would bring the contending parties to some better understanding. It is likewise highly probable that he intended to recommend Bentley, when occasion served, to some station in the Church which might remove him from the scene of disagreement. At this time a general expectation prevailed of the Master's speedy advancement: indeed it was reported that he was actually appointed to the deanery of Lichfield<sup>2</sup>. Bentley's own activity and exertions were great to maintain and increase his reputation, and to strengthen his interest; but unfortunately his endeavours to put an end to the College dissensions, which were an evident obstacle to his advancement, were not dictated by a pacific spirit. He made no concession or retractation, but clung to the idea of inducing his prosecutors to give up their proceedings and acquiesce in all his schemes and arrangements.

May 20.  
 Death of  
 Prof. Sike.

A deplorable occurrence took place this spring in Trinity College: Dr. Henry Sike, the learned orien-

<sup>2</sup> His friend Kuster, writing to him from Amsterdam, Aug. 5, 1712, in Latin, adds this English postscript.—“P.S. After I had written this letter, (which I have kept from one post day to another, waiting for Mr. Hemsterhuise's letter for to be inclosed in myne) there came to see me some English gentlemen, and amongst them one of your College, *nomine* Town, a physician (*qui magni te facit*) who brought me the good news that you were made Dean of Lichtfield. *Ego plane erectus fui hoc nuncio*; and upon that I drank presently first your health, and afterwards upon the confirmation of this news. I can assure you, Sir, that I shall long heartily to have the confirmation of this from you, because nobody of your friends can take more part in your prosperity than I do; having found that I have no truer friend then you. Mr. Hemsterhuise desseins to write this same day. *Vale.*”——Writing again shortly afterwards, he says, “*Te a Serenissima Regina creatum esse Decanum Litchfeldensem, etiam ab aliis postea mihi relatum est; qua ex re ingentem voluptatem cepi: gratulor tibi ex animo de nova hac dignitate, et quidem eo magis, quo magis id inimicis tuis doliturum esse novi. Pudor jam, credo, et reverentia rursus intrabit animos eorum, qui in Collegio, cui præsides, tamdiu erga te contumaces fuerunt.*”



talist, who through the address and influence of CHAP. XI.  
 Bentley had been made Professor of Hebrew, perished 1712.  
 by suicide <sup>3</sup>. To what this sad catastrophe was attri-  
 butable I do not comprehend; but I find that it raised  
 excessive grief and horror among the learned through-  
 out Europe. Sike was esteemed by every one for  
 his talents and disposition; all appear to have felt  
 interested for his welfare, and to have nourished high  
 expectations of the fruits which were to result from  
 his erudition <sup>4</sup>.

This melancholy event was followed in a few weeks  
 by the death of Professor Barnes, whose uncomfort-  
 able situation we have lately described. The election  
 to the two vacant professorships of Hebrew and Greek

August 24.  
 Election of  
 Hebrew  
 and Greek  
 Professors.

<sup>3</sup> Rud's MS. Diary. "May 20, 1712. Dr. Sykes (Sike) hanged himself some time this evening, before candlelight, in his sash, which bore his weight till he was dead, but broke before morning; for he was found lying upon the floor, with part of it about his neck, the rest still hanging upon the hook."

<sup>4</sup> I do not understand the allusion in Saxius's *Onomasticon Literarium*, vol. v. p. 491, where the notice of Sike thus concludes. "Postea in Angliam translatus literarum orientis doctor publicus in Academia Cantabrigiensi extitit; ubi exprobratam sibi, quam olim meruerat, crucis poenam indigne ferens, laqueo sibi ipse gulam domi fregit."

Adrian Reland, who was then printing his *Palæstina*, writes thus to Bentley, July 23, 1712. "At quam nos turbavit nuncius horribilis! In hunc usque diem fidem habere non potui rumoribus de Sikio nostro circumlatis. Nunc coram se testem fuisse infandi spectaculi affirmat Crownfieldius. O infelix fatum! et damnum quod literæ nostræ patiuntur vix reparabile. Promiserat et mihi nuperis literis Excerpta ex Abulfeda quæ ad Palæstinam spectant. Nisi illa tua auctoritate nanciscar per aliquem sermonis Arabici gnarum, Ockleyum aliumve, spem omnem abjicere cogar."

Francis Burman, writing from Amsterdam, says: "Adeone verum est Sikium sibi necem conscivisse? Quibus furiis agitatus tantum scelus perpetravit, cui jam in re lauta ac splendida esse licebat? Vix famæ, quæ valde incerta ad me pervenit, credidi."

Matthias Ancherson, a young Dane who had studied for some time at Cambridge under the tuition of Sike, writes from Copenhagen a letter full of mourning at the sad tidings, and of veneration for his deceased preceptor, of whose projected undertakings he gives some account. I find, from the register of St. Michael's parish, that Sike was buried there, May 28, 1712.



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1712.

took place at the same time ; when Dr. Philip Bouquet was chosen to fill the former, and Mr. Thomas Pilgrim the latter office. They were both Fellows of Trinity: Bouquet had been substituted during the last vacancy of the Hebrew chair; the latter was a young man of ability and high character, and was already the most distinguished among the tutors of the College. It may be observed that he had subscribed the late articles of accusation : as his advancement to the Greek professorship was with the consent, perhaps by the recommendation, of Dr. Bentley, this must be deemed an attempt to conciliate one of the most respectable of his opponents, at the same time that he exhibited his own magnanimity and spirit of forgiveness.

Dr. Stubbe  
excluded  
from the  
office of  
Vice-mas-  
ter.

From the commencement of the proceedings the Master had aimed at dissolving the confederacy, by sowing divisions among its members ; as he foresaw that if two parties could be established among the malcontents, one of them would ere long fall in with his own schemes. The Fellows were aware of his design, and held together for more than two years so firmly, that not the slightest tendency to a separation was visible. Perseverance however succeeded. The vice-mastership, like other College offices, is supplied at an annual election by the Master and Seniors ; but in practice the same individual is usually re-elected, as long as it continues agreeable to himself. The ordinary business of this office is to preside among the Fellows : in the absence of the Master the station becomes one of importance, as most of the authority of the Head devolves upon his representative. Dr. Stubbe had passed a great portion of the last two or three years in London, devoting himself to the management of the suit. This afforded Bentley a plausible ground to propose another person as Vice-



master; but, as he must be one of the eight Seniors, CHAP. XI.  
 the choice lay only among his prosecutors. At the 1712.  
 two preceding elections he had nominated Dr. Thomas Smith, who was, next to Stubbe, the most respected of the number; and on each occasion the Board resisted the change. Smith however was not proof against this petty ambition: he saw that the dignity was within his grasp; for the statutes invest the Master with such a power at elections, that he is able, with the support of one Senior, to choose a candidate, even against the opposition of the other seven. Accordingly he hinted to his brethren his resolution to obtain the station: they perceived that it would be impolitic to urge any further resistance; and therefore, on Bentley's proposing him as Vice-master, at the election in 1712, in order to avoid the appearance of division, they signified their assent<sup>5</sup>. The Master and his friends represented this election as an overt act of pacification, or 'as a renouncing of the quarrel,' shown by the prosecutors voluntarily abandoning their leader; and succeeded in possessing the public with the notion that matters were in a train of amicable settlement. Upon poor Stubbe this event operated as

<sup>5</sup> This is the account given of the affair in Dr. Colbatch's MSS. Bentley, in his letter to Thos. Bateman, Esq. Christmas day, 1712, intended for the eye of Lord Oxford, gives a different turn to it. "Last October, as you know already, they (the Seniors) turned old Stubbe, the principal in the subscription, out of the vice-mastership, and chose, by my nomination, one Dr. Smith, which was looked upon by the whole University as a renouncing of the former quarrel. And even poor Stubbe retired out of College to London, that he might not be the head of the party here; and had he thought that there was *locus pœnitentiæ*, would have made his submission to me. In a word, if I am thought worthy of being owned by our Mæcenæ, there will not be a month's space before the affairs of this House will be unanimously referred to her Majesty's commands, how dividends, &c. shall go for the future." Dr. Stubbe himself, in a note to the Lord Treasurer, of Oct. 21, says, "Dr. Bentley has been lately at his old trade of *divide et impera*, which will oblige our College, I fear, to take some speedy course with him."



CHAP. XI. a sentence of exile from the House in which he had  
1712. passed almost the whole of a long life. His wounded feelings would not allow him to return to a place, where he must descend to a lower seat than that which he had long occupied ; rather than submit to such mortification, he preferred ending his days in London.

Failure of  
 Bentley's  
 attempt to  
 terminate  
 the prosecu-  
 tion.

Jan. 9,  
 1712-13.

At the last year's audit, the Master being absent, the Seniors had voted a dividend upon the usual scale. But in the winter of 1712 Dr. Bentley refused his consent to issue a dividend, unless they would subscribe to his plan ; calculating that the privation of their income must compel them to acquiesce in his conditions. The result was exactly opposite to his expectations. The Fellows, finding that nothing was gained by forbearance, resolved to be no longer deceived by the promises of countenance and protection from the Government. Stubbe thus pours out his sorrows in a letter to the Prime Minister : “ Dr. Bentley, I hear, at the auditing our College accounts, refused to vote a dividend of the remaining money, in order to starve the poor members of our society into an acquiescence under his base and unworthy measures. Our college, my Lord, though it be dutiful and silent, is in a very wretched condition ; and if your Lordship please to look upon it with compassion, you will be a second founder to us. My Lord, I cannot ask pardon for this, without remembering my former offences of this nature ; but I cannot doubt either of your Lordship's pardon, or of the success of my petition, when I consider that I speak for a nursery of learning to my Lord of Oxford.” The Minister seems to have had recourse to his universal specific, and enjoined further patience and delay ; but Miller, whose quarrel with Bentley was personal, urged the necessity of applying to the Court of



Queen's Bench for the purpose of obliging the Bishop of Ely to proceed as Visitor. It was believed that the Royal prohibition was illegal, and would not be recognised by the Court. Lord Oxford was apprised by Stubbe, that all his endeavours to prevent the cause being brought forward would probably be in vain: whereupon the ministry determined that the validity of their proceedings should not be made the subject of an argument before the Bench, and the Secretary of State, now Lord Bolingbroke, wrote to Bishop Moore, giving him the Queen's permission to proceed in this cause 'as far as by law he was empowered.' Before the end of the Easter term the affair of the Master of Trinity College was first introduced into the Court of Queen's Bench by Mr. Page, (afterwards the Judge of hanging notoriety), who, as counsel for the Fellows, obtained a rule for the Bishop to shew cause why a mandamus should not issue to compel him to discharge his judicial functions.

CHAP. XI.  
1713.

April 18,  
1713.  
Prohibition  
taken off.

Rule grant-  
ed by the  
Court of  
Queen's  
Bench.

Before we describe the effects of this accelerating power upon the proceedings, it will be right to notice the exertions of Bentley and his friends to engage the public opinion in his favour. He entered into the management of University business more than he had hitherto done. The Vice-chancellor, Quadring, Master of Magdalene College, being old and infirm frequently required a deputy in that fatiguing office, and Bentley was always his ready substitute<sup>6</sup>. In June, 1712, he displayed his zeal in support of the Government: a furious attack had been just made by the Whigs in the House of Lords, complaining of the negotiations carrying on at Utrecht, and of the British interests being separated from those of our Allies; and upon this question they expected to have accom-

Bentley De-  
puty Vice-  
Chancellor.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Gabriel Quadring was Bachelor of Arts in 1660; he must, therefore, have been above seventy years of age when chosen Vice-chancellor.



CHAP. XI.  
1713.

Presents an  
address of  
the Univer-  
sity to the  
Queen.  
June 11.

plished the overthrow of the Cabinet<sup>7</sup>. The Minister, although he obtained a majority, was desirous of being strengthened by public expressions in favour of his measures. Accordingly Bentley proposed to the Senate an address to the Queen, thanking her Majesty for having made so much progress in the work of pacification, and expressing unbounded confidence in the wisdom of her councils. It is to be remarked that this address declared the attachment of the University to the Hanover succession, terming the princes of that house 'her Majesty's relations.' It was delivered by the Master of Trinity, who at the head of the University was introduced to the Royal presence by the Lord Treasurer<sup>8</sup>.

Severe grace  
of the Se-  
nate against  
Bentley.

Bentley was destined however to experience a severe rebuff from the body to whom he had thus volunteered his services: whatever might be the motive, a determination was taken by the members of the Senate, that they would never more be placed under his presidency. The alleged complaint was, that Dr. Brookbank, the Official of the Archdeacon of Ely, had granted probates of wills and administrations of goods to the heirs of members of the University, a right considered as belonging to the academical Court. The subject was not likely in

<sup>7</sup> Secretary St. John writing to Mr. Harley at Utrecht, on this day, says, "The House of Lords is at this moment in debate on the Queen's speech, and his Lordship (Oxford), while I am writing to you, may very probably be employed in wiping off some of the dirt which that scavenger, Wharton, throws at him." *Bolingbroke's Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 433. Dr. Swift says of this debate in his *Journal to Stella*, "We got a great victory last Wednesday in the House of Lords by a majority, I think, of twenty-eight; and the Whigs had desired their friends to bespeak places to see Lord Treasurer carried to the Tower." Whether this were written in earnest or in joke, may be doubted: but it did actually happen, about three years after, that Lord Oxford was carried to the Tower, and on account of this very negotiation.

<sup>8</sup> The Address itself may be found in the *Annals of Queen Anne*, vol. ii.



itself to occasion much interest; and, as far as appears, CHAP. XI.  
 no innovation had been made on the practice which 1713.  
 had long prevailed; yet upon this ground, without <sup>Oct. 10,</sup>  
 any previous step, a grace was brought into the <sup>1712.</sup>  
 Senate, enacting that in future no Archdeacon of  
 Ely, or Official of the Archdeacon, although Head  
 of a college, should be capable of acting as Vice-  
 chancellor, or deputy Vice-chancellor; a measure  
 avowedly levelled against Bentley, who in the ordi-  
 nary course was approaching to a second year of  
 office. It was passed not only unanimously, but with  
 a shout of applause. As there was no appearance  
 of the Doctor having wilfully infringed the privi-  
 leges of the body, this proceeding must be regarded  
 as harsh and unhandsome; nor can it be accounted  
 for, except from the prejudice against him which  
 the long continued complaints of his own Fellows  
 could not fail to have excited in the University at  
 large<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Stubbe sent Lord Oxford a copy of this grace against Bentley, taking care to tell him that 'it passed in the Senate House with a more than usual shout.' A letter from Mr. Wm. Bishop, dated Jan. 5, 1712-13, among the Ballard Collection in the Bodleian library, gives a similar account of it on the authority of Dr. Mosse the Dean of Ely.

The temper of the Academical Senate just at this period appears to have been none of the gentlest. About three weeks after the explosion against Bentley they aimed a blow at the Heads in general, against whom they were incensed for not allowing them an Auditor of their own. A scheme was therefore laid for having a Vice-chancellor of their own. This office had been confined to the Heads since the year 1586, when it was filled by Dr. Capcot, a Fellow of Trinity. It was now the turn of Dr. Adams, the Provost of King's: on the 3d of Nov. he and Dr. Greene, Master of Corpus, were put in nomination. This being considered a matter of mere routine, only four of the Heads happened to be present; the place of others was supplied by the Presidents or Senior Fellows of their respective Colleges. One of these unexpectedly proposed Mr. Hawkins, a Fellow of Pembroke Hall, others joined in the nomination, and he was on the point of being returned to the Senate as one of the two candidates; in which case he would infallibly have been elected Vice Chancellor on the



CHAP. XI.  
1713.

In the present circumstances of Dr. Bentley, when both his character and fortunes were exposed to peril, it was highly desirable for him to have the testimony of persons of reputation in favour of his merits and conduct. Accordingly, we find that many of his friends, who were zealous in their attachment, took occasion about this time to represent him in the most glowing colours which the spirit of panegyric could devise. Their compliments, indeed, may be termed extravagant, and the laudatory language in which they are couched is apt to disgust the reader: but they undoubtedly produced their intended effect of counteracting the impression on the public mind which his enemies laboured to produce.

Dr. Samuel  
Clarke.

The first to be recorded of these panegyrists is the celebrated scholar and divine, Dr. Samuel Clarke, the Rector of St. James's. Between him and our critic there had long subsisted a friendship, which was not abated by their taking different courses in the stormy sea of politics. He put forth in 1712 his edition of Cæsar's Commentaries, with an appropriate dedication to the Duke of Marlborough, the modern conqueror of the Gauls. Bentley having given him the use of a manuscript from the King's library, Clarke takes occasion to speak of this favour in terms

following day. But at this critical moment, Dr. Smith, the new Vice-master of Trinity, and another voter entered the Regent House, and by giving their voices in favour of the Heads, overturned the project. This anecdote is told by Atwood, the Esquire Beadle, in his MS. Diary. Mr. Will. Cole, who transcribes it, notices that a similar attempt was made sixty years afterwards, in 1772, when Mr. Stephen Whisson, Fellow of Trinity College, one of the most exemplary characters in the University, was very near being chosen Vice Chancellor: but the plan was defeated by Whisson himself declining the intended honour. The person who was to have been set aside on this occasion was Dr. Cooke, the Provost of King's. Cole, who disliked the Provost, would have rejoiced at his mortification; but his own aristocratical principles made him condemn an attempt, which he considered to have too republican a tendency.



obviously intended to counteract the notion, not yet obliterated, of his uncourteous treatment of Mr. Boyle relative to the far-famed copy of Phalaris : *Maximum mihi hoc in opere auxilium attulit liber MS. haud quidem ipse antiquissimus, ex valde antiquis autem, ut videtur, codicibus exscriptus ; quem e Bibliotheca Regia utendum mihi dedit vir in hujusmodi rebus peritia plane incredibili, et criticos unus omnes longe longeque judicio et sagacitate antecellens, RICHARDUS BENTLEIUS.* And in a note at p. 424, he again compliments him in similar language of superlative panegyric : “ *Vide illustrissimi et acri judicio quidquid ubique est criticorum longe exsuperantis RICHARDI BENTLEII Emendationes ad Ciceronis Disputationes Tusculanas a Davisio editas,*” p. 80. CHAP. XI.  
1713.

Mr. James Jurin a junior Fellow of Trinity College and master of Newcastle school, had undertaken by Bentley's advice a new edition of the Geography of Bernhard Varenius, a book of which copies were become scarce and in great request. He published it in 1712, adding as an appendix some account of the discoveries and improvements in geography since the time of Varenius, who wrote in the middle of the 17th century. The book is well executed, and is dedicated in devoted terms to Dr. Bentley, whose interests he espoused with the most zealous attachment. An extract from the preface is inserted in the note, as a specimen of the language held at this time by the partizans of the Master of Trinity<sup>10</sup>. Jurin.

<sup>10</sup> “ Cum frustra jam ubique fere quærerentur apud bibliopolas Varenii exemplaria, idque judicaret magno cum Juventutis Academicæ detrimento fieri Vir Reverendus RICHARDUS BENTLEIUS, quem neque publica munera, quæ singulari cum doctrina, labore, fide, sanctitate, et sapientia administrat ; tum illa quibus Reginæ optimæ et Ecclesiæ inservit ; tum quo partem Academicæ celeberrimæ minime postremam impensiori studio fovet, alit, ornat, ac magis indies magisque efflorescere facit, et, ut vera dicam, cogit ; neque privata studia, quibus orbem eruditum indefessa diligentia



CHAP. XI. 1713. Jurin's own history is too curious to be passed without notice : at the time of this publication he was master of a country grammar-school, and had reached his thirtieth year : nevertheless he afterwards adopted the profession of medicine, and became a physician of high celebrity and great practice in the metropolis ; he distinguished himself as a successful advocate for inoculation, and was the author of various scientific papers in the Philosophical Transactions ; for a long time he was Secretary to the Royal Society ; and finally became President of the College of Physicians, which station he held at the time of his death in 1750.

Publication  
of Newton's  
*Principia*.

But there was a more distinguished publication, in which the praises of Dr. Bentley were proclaimed in as high a strain of encomium. This was Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia*, which appeared in the spring of 1713. The long interval since this work was put to press is accounted for in the interesting correspondence between the illustrious author and its editor Professor Cotes. The numerous avocations of Sir Isaac, the careful consideration which he gave to the improvements introduced in his immortal work, and the suggestions made from time to time by Cotes, all of which he received with attention, had contributed to delay its appearance. Bentley having been the prime mover of this publication, Cotes wished that the preface should be written by him : but it was the opinion both of the Doctor and Sir Isaac, that this ought to come from the pen of the editor. The following letter from Cotes to Bentley on this subject

ditare et erudire pergit; nec atrox denique obtrectatorum invidia, qua jamdudum animo excelso, et egregie sibi conscio conflictatur, quamque jamjam feliciter, ut spero, eluctatur et proculcat, quin minima quæque ad rem literariam pertinentia cura sua amplectetur, prohibere potuerunt: is me, de quo majorem æquo, pro bonitate sua et humanitate, opinionem conceperat, hortatus est, ut novæ hujusce editionis curam susciperem."



contains matter so curious that there needs no apology CHAP. XI.  
1713.  
for submitting it to the reader :

“ Sir,

March 10, 1712— 713 .

“ I received what you wrote to me in Sir Isaac’s letter. I will set about the index in a day or two. As for the preface, I should be glad to know from Sir Isaac with what view he thinks proper to have it written. You know the book has been received abroad with some disadvantage, and the cause of it may be easily guessed at; the *Commercium Epistolicum*, lately published by order of the Royal Society, gives such indubitable proofs of Mr. Leibnitz’s want of candour, that I shall not scruple in the least to speak out the full truth of the matter, if it be thought convenient. There are some pieces of his looking this way, which deserve a censure, as his *Tentamen de motuum cœlestium causis*. If Sir Isaac is willing that something of this nature may be done, I should be glad, if, whilst I am making the index, he would consider of it, and put down a few notes of what he thinks most material to be insisted on. This I say upon supposition that I write the preface myself. But I think it will be much more advisable that you or he, or both of you should write it, whilst you are in town. You may depend upon it that I will own it, and defend it as well as I can, if hereafter there be occasion.

“ I am, Sir,” &c.

The preface, with which all votaries of science are acquainted, concludes with the following paragraph :

“ Extabit igitur eximium NEWTONI opus adversus atheorum impetus munitissimum præsidium : neque enim alicunde felicius, quam ex hac pharetra contra impiam catervam tela deprompteris. Hoc sensit pridem, et in pereruditis concionibus Anglice Latineque editis, primus egregie demonstravit Vir in omni literarum genere præclarus, idemque bonarum artium fautor eximius RICHARDUS BENTLEIUS, sæculi sui, et Academiæ nostræ magnum ornamentum, Collegii nostri *S. Trinitatis* Magister dignissimus et integerrimus. Huic ego me pluribus nominibus obstrictum fateri debeo : Huic et tuas quæ debentur gratias, Lector benevole, non denegabis. Is enim, cum a longo tempore celeberrimi auctoris amicitia intima frueretur, (qua etiam apud posteros censi non minoris æstimat, quam propriis scriptis quæ literato orbi in deliciis sunt inclarescere) amici simul famæ et scientiarum incremento consuluit. Itaque cum exemplaria prioris editionis rarissima admodum et immani pretio coemenda superessent; suasit ille crebris efflagitationibus et tantum non ob-



CHAP. XI. 1713. jurgando perpulit denique Virum præstantissimum, nec modestia minus quam eruditione summa insignem, ut novam hanc operis editionem, per omnia elimatam denuo et egregiis insuper accessionibus ditatam, suis sumptibus et auspiciis prodire pateretur: mihi vero, pro jure suo, pensum non ingratum demandavit, ut quam posset emendate id fieri curarem<sup>11</sup>.

“*Cantabrigiæ, Maii 12, 1713.*”

Our critic in the meantime was not sparing of his own exertions to increase his already extensive reputation. Besides the second edition of his Horace, he put forth in 1713 a reprint of the ‘Emendations of Menander,’ adding to it his celebrated Epistle to Mill, the earliest fruit of his genius. This publication issued from the Cambridge press, and was of course considered as a public avowal of the real *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*: the violent preface of Burman, being the offspring of private resentment against Le Clerc, was judiciously omitted.

Thomas Bentley's little Horace.

The Doctor's nephew, Thomas Bentley, the son of his elder brother James, was at this time a Bachelor of Arts in Trinity College: he was an amiable youth, a promising scholar, and devoted in his attachment to the person and fame of his uncle. As the size and price of the Horace impeded its circulation, Bentley suggested to this young man, as the commencement of his literary career, to publish a small edition of the work with short annotations. He executed this task by printing scrupulously his uncle's text, giving the common readings in the margin, and affixing some brief explanatory notes which might be useful to younger readers. The large work being dedicated to the Earl of Oxford, this little

<sup>11</sup> Bentley was highly gratified by this encomium, which various circumstances contributed to render valuable to him. In the postscript of a letter to Mr. Bateman, July 12, he says, “Prithee see, at the end of the preface of Mr. Cotes, our Astronomy Professor, one of the finest young men of Europe, what character is given of me there, in Sir Isaac's book.”



Horace was inscribed to his son, Lord Harley. For this Dedication, which, as a juvenile production, candid persons would have forborne to criticise, Thomas Bentley was abused many years afterwards by Pope and Warburton, with great asperity, in the notes on the *Dunciad*<sup>12</sup>. CHAP. XI.  
1713.

It was at this crisis that Dr. Bentley had an opportunity of rendering a signal and memorable service to the Church, and employing his learning for the most legitimate of all purposes, the defence of religion. Anthony Collins, a gentleman of education and fortune, who in early life enjoyed the friendship of Locke, had for some years devoted himself to the dissemination of his own principles of infidelity. Being respectable in his private life, popular and agreeable in his manners, and possessing an extensive acquaintance, he acquired influence in society; and so great was his zeal in the cause, that he seems to have proposed to himself the character of an apostle of irreligion. At the beginning of 1713 he published, without his name, a book styled ‘A Discourse of Free-Thinking, occasioned by the Rise and Growth of a Sect called Free-Thinkers.’ It is but too certain that deism had been making considerable advance in England since the Revolution, and that its progress had been aided by the insidious writings of Shaftesbury, Toland, Tindal, and other enemies of revealed religion. But the assumption of a ‘growing sect’ seems to have been

Collins's  
Discourse of  
Free-think-  
ing.

<sup>12</sup> Book II. 205. This matter we shall have occasion to mention hereafter. Richard Johnson in the Preface to *Aristarchus Anti-Bentleianus*, charges Bentley with having himself published this small Horace under the name of his nephew, and with having styled himself *Seculi Decus*. This is a gratuitous calumny, as improbable as it is malicious. The editor declares that his uncle merely suggested the plan, but had not even seen the work before its publication.



CHAP. XI. 1713. an artifice designed to imply an uniformity of opinions, which did not really exist, among the impugners of Christianity. Or if the 'sect' had any thing like 'a local habitation and a name,' it was a small knot of persons whose ordinary place of rendezvous was the Grecian Coffee-house near Temple Bar; and of them Mr. Collins was himself the centre. His present work, whether we regard its literary merit, its power of argument, or the profoundness of its views, appears totally unworthy of the attention which it excited: the learning is superficial, the reasoning unsound, and the information upon general topics loose and inaccurate; while his 'sapless pages' (as Bentley well denominates them) are destitute of those indispensable requisites, honesty and candour, for the absence of which no merits can atone. Nevertheless, this publication, intrinsically so worthless, occasioned great sensation: it appeared as the manifesto of a party; it assumed the concurrence of almost all great men of every age and country in similar tenets of 'free-thinking;' and it attacked the clergy of the Established Church with especial severity. The authoritative and self-sufficient tone in which its positions are laid down, and its perpetual appeals to ancient literature, were well calculated to entrap the careless and half-learned, who at all times constitute a large proportion of the reading public.

Replies by 'The Discourse of Free-Thinking,' having from these causes made much noise in the world, drew upon itself a host of replies; and, however 'worthless of such honour,' exercised some of the ablest pens of the age in its refutation. Dr. Hoadly wrote a few pages of 'Queries,' placing in a clear and forcible light the fallacious reasoning and evil tendency of



Collins's positions<sup>13</sup>. A tract, called 'Reflexions on an Anonymous Pamphlet,' &c. appeared from the ready pen of Mr. Whiston, who, although himself at open war with the Establishment, and smarting under the censures which his heresies had provoked, yet condemned the unfair attack here made upon the clergy, and exposed the objects of this scoffer in their true colours. Dr. Swift, who was at that time devoting his days and nights to uphold the cause of his friends in administration, laid hold of this piece as one in which the High Church party were made prominent objects of attack, and published an 'Abstract' of Collins's arguments, divested of the quotations, which fill half his book. The Discourse, in this form, is supposed to be written by a Whig, with the professed intention of making converts to that party. This attempt to palm upon his political opponents the principles of an infidel must be condemned as an unjustifiable stratagem; but the 'Abstract' itself, by stripping off all extraneous matter, has the effect of exhibiting the tenets of the Free-Thinker's Discourse in their native deformity; and although tinctured with Swift's peculiar vein of humour, the parody, considered as a composition, is clearly superior to the original. The Whigs, on their part, were not slow in declaring their abhorrence of Collins's performance: besides the tract of Hoadly, the Guardian, a paper conducted by Steele in support of that interest, contained in its third number a sensible and keen article against this design to ridicule the Scriptures: it was written by Mr. Berkeley, afterwards Bishop of Cloyne. The same amiable philosopher recurred to this book in the 39th paper of the Guardian,

CHAP. XI.

1713.

Whiston.

Swift.

Berkeley.

<sup>13</sup> *Queries recommended to the Authors of a late Discourse of Free-Thinking. By a Christian. London. 1713.*



CHAP. XI. giving an allegorical account of the composition of the  
 1713. brain and heart of its author. Dr. Ibbot, chaplain to  
 Ibbot. Archbishop Tenison, chose for the subject of his  
 Boyle's Lectures a refutation of Collins's Discourse.  
 But the fame of all the above pieces has been  
 eclipsed by that of Dr. Bentley's unrivalled criticism  
 on this deistical performance. Immediately on its  
 publication he took it up, and finding that the learn-  
 ing was unsound, the reasoning bad, and the object  
 malicious, he resolved to expose it in its true colours ;  
 and he has in fact made its author a warning to all  
 vain and superficial sceptics, who are tempted to  
 employ their puny sophistry in attacks upon revealed  
 religion.

Bentley's  
 Reply, un-  
 der the title  
 of Phileleu-  
 therus Lip-  
 siensis.

Our critic bethought him of assuming the same  
 title in his reply to Collins, as he had maintained  
 with so much credit in his book upon Le Clerc's  
 Menander. The conceit was happy ; for the name of  
*Phileleutherus Lipsiensis* chanced to have a two-fold  
 convenience : as a 'lover of freedom,' he could with  
 propriety expose the false pretence to 'free-thinking,'  
 made by a writer who inculcated a set of opinions  
 'the most slavish, the most abject and base, that  
 human nature is capable of ;' and in the character of  
 a Leipsic scholar, supposed of course to be a Lutheran,  
 he could encounter the attacks made upon Christ-  
 ianity in general, without displaying any particular  
 interest in favour of the English clergy, against whom  
 the malice of Collins was prominently directed. To  
 ascertain the identity of the author was unnecessary ;  
 since it was made no secret that these 'Remarks on  
 the Discourse of Free-Thinking' were from the pen of  
 Bentley. They were preceded by a dedicatory epis-  
 tle addressed to 'My very Learned and Honoured  
 Friend, F. H. D.D. at London, Great Britain :' this  
 friend was understood to be Dr. Francis Hare, to whose



care the remarks upon Menander had actually been committed by Phileleutherus. CHAP. XI.  
1713.

Nothing can be more judicious or effectual than the manner in which the Doctor takes to pieces the shallow but dangerous performance of the infidel. Not satisfied with replying to particular arguments, he cuts the ground from under his feet, by exposing the fallacious mode of reasoning which pervades them all, and the contemptible sophism which represents all good and great men of every age and country to have been 'free-thinkers,' and consequently partizans of his own sect. But the happiest of the Remarks are those which display the mistakes and ignorance of Collins in his citations from classical writers. By a kind of fatality, his translations are perpetually inaccurate, and his conception of the originals erroneous: and though most of his blunders are the effects of ignorance, yet not a few seem to arise from a deliberate intention of deceiving his readers. Never was the advantage more conspicuous of a ripe and perfect scholar over a half-learned smatterer: while the latter searches book after book in pursuit of passages favourable to his own theory, the former, familiar with the writings and characters of the authors, and accurately versed in their language, is able to take to pieces the ill-assorted patchwork of irrelevant quotations. These parts of Bentley's work are not only effectual in demolishing his adversary, but are both entertaining and useful to the reader; and to them it is owing that the book has experienced a fate so different from that of other controversial writings: even the ablest and best-written of such pieces generally fall into oblivion along with the dispute which gave them birth; but the 'Remarks of Phileleutherus' are still read with the same delight as at their first appearance. The fact of their having passed through a

Character  
of his Re-  
marks.



CHAP. XI. multitude of editions at considerable intervals of time  
 1713. marks a continuance of interest among the educated public, only to be accounted for by the intrinsic value of the work.

Society for  
 the Propa-  
 gation of the  
 Gospel.

Collins having assailed Christianity and its professors with ridicule, the usual method of the infidels, Bentley determined that he should experience the full power of the weapon which he had chosen. But there was much difference between the two cases : the enemy of religion had scoffed at opinions which, being seriously and honestly entertained by Christians, would have claimed from a candid adversary the tribute of respect : he himself, on the other hand, incurred derision for his ignorance, self-sufficiency, and insolence, the most legitimate objects of ridicule. At the present day it is interesting to observe that ‘The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts’ was in its early years distinguished by the especial hatred of the enemies of Christianity. Collins accordingly levels his sneers against this institution in such conceits as the following :

“ We have here in England a Society supported by the encouragement of her most excellent Majesty, and the contributions of many divines and ladies of our Established Church, in effect for the propagation of free-thinking in matters of religion throughout the world ; and whose design supposes, that it is all men’s duty to think freely about matters of religion. For how can the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts hope to have any effect on infidel nations, without first acquainting them that it is their duty to think freely, both on the notions of God and religion, which they have received from their ancestors, or which are established by law among them, and on those new notions of God and religion brought to them by the Missionarys of the Church of England ? ” — “ Nay, should the King of Siam (or any other infidel prince) in return for the favour of our endeavours to convert him and his kingdom to our religion, desire to send us a parcel of his Talapoins (so the priests of Siam are call’d) to convert us to the religion by law established in Siam ; I cannot see but that our Society for Propagating the Gospel,



and all the contributors and well-wishers to it, must acknowledge the King's request to be highly reasonable, and perfectly of a piece with their own project."—"And oh! that the proper persons were but employ'd for the execution of so glorious a design! That such zealous divines as our S——ls, our At——ys, our Sm——ges, our St——bes, our Higgins, our M——rns, and our Sw——fts, were drawn out annually, as our military missionarys are, to be sent into foreign parts to propagate the Gospel<sup>14</sup>!"—*Discourse of Free-Thinking*, p. 41. CHAP. XI.  
1713.

After pointing out the tendency of sneers and insults upon the Sovereign, with which this insipid banter commences, Bentley replies:

"But to leave unpleasing thoughts, and for once to 'answer a fool according to his folly.' Are the Talapoins of Siam then to be put here upon a level with the whole clergy of England; the light and glory (if they are not chang'd all on a sudden) of present Christianity? and this done by a sorry retailer of atheistical scraps, which he understands not three lines of; but at the first offer of a translation betrays his stupidity? Is he to 'draw out' your divines, whose names we know not here because he has mangl'd them; but conclude them to be men of worth and distinction, from the very credit of his abusing them? If he is once for 'drawing out,' and reviving the old trade of *Ἀνδραποδοκαπηλία*, *selling and exporting of men*, it may perhaps be found more serviceable to your Government to oblige your East India Company to take on board the whole 'growing sect,' and lodge them at Madagascar among their confess'd and claim'd kindred (since they make themselves but a higher species of brutes) the monkeys and the drills: or to order your new South Sea Company to deliver them to the Spaniards as part of the *assiento*, to be

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<sup>14</sup> In Swift's Parody of this part of Collins's Discourse, (which is, in point of style, a clear improvement of the original), it is curious to observe that he selects the company in which he would choose to be transported:

"Here is a Society in London for propagating free-thinking throughout the world, encouraged and supported by the Queen and many others. You say, perhaps, it is for propagating the Gospel, &c.—I heartily wish a detachment of such divines as Dr. Atterbury, Dr. Smalridge, Dr. Swift, Dr. Sacheverell, and some others, were sent every year to the farthest part of the heathen world, and that we had a cargo of their priests in return, who would spread free-thinking among us."—*Swift's Works*, vol. viii. p. 302.



CHAP. XI. free-diggers in the mines there; and after a decent time in that  
 1713. purgatory, to convey them to their happy country, their paradise of  
 New Jersey; where neither priest, nor physician, nor lawyer, can  
 molest them." *Remarks upon a late Discourse of Free-Thinking*,  
 p. 67, ed. 1743.

Whitby.

Sacred cri-  
 ticism.

The publication of Mill's Greek Testament had excited alarm among some, who apprehended that the number of various readings discovered in different copies of the Scriptures endangered the authority of the whole, and a strong protestation had been made against the pursuits of the critic by Dr. Whitby, a laborious but ill-judging divine. The opportunity of attacking the sacred volume upon this score was too tempting to be omitted by Mr. Collins: to him therefore, or rather to Whitby, Phileleutherus makes a satisfactory reply. His remarks on this subject are of such great and permanent importance, and the point of view in which he places the study of sacred criticism is so luminous and convincing, that from the time of this publication no friend of religion has been heard to decry the critical study of the inspired writings:—nor have there been any cavils founded upon the variation of manuscripts, to which a satisfactory reply may not be found in the pages of Phileleutherus.

Having carried his 'Remarks' through one half of the 'Discourse,' he discovered that they already amounted to a good sized pamphlet; and accordingly issued them from the press, promising that, if he understood it would be serviceable to religion or agreeable to the English clergy, he would give the world another letter on the remainder.

Hare's Cler-  
 gyman's  
 Thanks to  
 Phileleu-  
 therus.

No sooner had this publication appeared, than Hare returned the compliment of the dedicatory address, by a well-written but extravagantly laudatory pamphlet, entitled 'The Clergyman's Thanks to Phileleu-



therus,' addressed by name to Dr. Bentley, whom no one doubted to be the real author of the 'Remarks.' CHAP. XI.  
1713.

The writer, who subscribes himself *Philo-Criticus*, displays the merits of the reply to Collins in a just light; for in truth a more complete overthrow of an adversary can scarcely be imagined: but his language is that of unrestrained panegyric, applied not only to this, but to the other works of Bentley; and being addressed to the person eulogized, it far exceeds the limits of delicacy and good taste. It proves however how great must have been our critic's fame to enable the public to tolerate such excessive praise of a living individual. The same observation applies to this as to the other panegyrics of Bentley put forth by his friends at this period; namely, that they were designed to counterbalance the obloquy vented against him by his enemies, and to show that, if he had a party hostile to him in the University, there were other and more distinguished persons who regarded him with all the warmth of friendship and admiration. This profuse tribute of praise, like that lately bestowed upon our critic by Dr. Clarke, possessed an additional advantage; it was evidently uninfluenced by party-spirit, Dr. Hare being devoted to the Whigs, and having lately made himself conspicuous by a sermon delivered before the Duke of Marlborough after the taking of Bouchain, wherein the conduct of Government in arresting the career of the conquerors was severely arraigned.

This laudatory pamphlet suggests that the first publication of *Phileleutherus* had been written with a view not unlike the present; since it displayed to the Free-thinkers, who considered Le Clerc as their head, 'that he was as much inferior to the truly learned, as they themselves were to him:' a remark which must



CHAP. XI. be confessed to sound rather like an after-thought <sup>15</sup>.  
1713.

In stating the want of a new critical edition of the Scriptures Hare expresses his conviction, that no one living except Bentley was equal to the task, and mentions how much people desired that he would favour the world with such a work, or at least with his *Critica Sacra*; of which he had given some ingenious and acute specimens interspersed in the Remarks upon Free-Thinking. This is worthy of observation, as being the first public suggestion of an undertaking which, in process of time, occupied so much of the Doctor's attention <sup>16</sup>.

Second part  
of Bentley's  
Remarks.

Encouraged by the flattering publication of the 'Clergyman's Thanks,' and still more by the general voice of approbation, Bentley again took in hand the Free-Thinker's book; of which the latter half consisted principally of extracts and translations, brought to prove this monstrous position, that Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Varro, Cato, Cicero, and in short all the virtuous and great of different ages, belonged to his own pretended sect. As far as Collins was concerned, the former Remarks had effectually destroyed his credit both for reasoning and knowledge. The second part therefore contributes little to the general effect; but it possesses a peculiar value from the clear and luminous view which it affords of the opinions of the ancient philosophers. The Free-Thinker, having a loose and imperfect idea of their tenets, and being resolved at all hazards to challenge every one of them as his own, misconstrues passages from their works, and misstates their sentiments; Bentley, while showing how his adversary distorts the meaning of his quotations, and flounders from blunder

<sup>15</sup> *Clergyman's Thanks*, p. 11.

<sup>16</sup> *Ditto*, p. 38.



to blunder, exhibits his own perfect acquaintance with their writings, and gives the reader concise and well-defined explanations of the opinions they entertained and the discipline they taught. His remarks upon Cicero will serve as a specimen both of the severe chastisement which he bestows upon Collins, and of his address in making his strictures the vehicle of solid information. CHAP. XI.  
1713.

When the second part of his Remarks had extended to the same bulk as the first, Bentley was called off from his task by the College prosecution, which imperiously demanded his undivided attention: he again broke off, leaving the work unfinished, and in his address to *F. H.* pretending to be written from Leipsic, playfully alluded to his private predicament. “And then you know my long lawsuit here, which is now removed to Dresden: and who would regard the ‘Free-Thinker,’ or willingly jade his own parts, under such clogs and impediments? I find when I set pen to paper, that I sink below my own level: *Quærit se ingenium nec invenit.* But if you’d had patience till my trial was over (for trial in my case is the same as victory) then perhaps your ‘growing sect’ might have felt to their cost; September,  
1713.

“*Et nos tela, pater, ferrumque haud debile dextra  
Spargimus, et nostro sequitur de vulnere sanguis.*”

The applause which hailed this publication was great and universal, and the general sensation excited in favour of our critic’s merits was highly important at the present crisis. Even his enemies, while they contended that the real object of his book was to take off the odium brought upon him by the prosecution, were still compelled to acknowledge the ability dis-



CHAP. XI. played in the performance <sup>17</sup>. Cumberland, in a  
1713. pamphlet written in defence of his illustrious grand-  
 father against the sneers of Bishop Lowth, tells us  
 that among other honours he received the unanimous  
 thanks of the whole Bench of Bishops for his ‘Remarks  
 on Free-Thinking <sup>18</sup>.’ That all the prelates who  
 were acquainted with Dr. Bentley would take an  
 opportunity of complimenting him on this service  
 rendered to the cause of religion, is highly probable;  
 but the story of his having received public and formal  
 thanks from the Bench I consider erroneous; for at a  
 later period of his life, when he makes a display of  
 the honours paid him on this occasion, he does not  
 mention such a compliment.

Collins's  
 disgraceful  
 behaviour.

The conduct of Collins was such as to justify the  
 late exposure of his character and principles. His  
 book concluded with a truly Epicurean sentiment—  
 ‘For I think it virtue enough to endeavour to do  
 good, only within the bounds of doing yourself no  
 harm.’ And he illustrated this notable maxim by  
 taking alarm at an unfounded rumour of his work  
 being in danger of a prosecution, and immediately  
 fled to Holland; thus showing, that however bold he  
 was against divine authority, he was tremblingly  
 afraid of human power. Instead of defending him-  
 self against Bentley’s ‘Remarks,’ which called in  
 question his character both for scholarship and good  
 faith, he endeavoured to elude them by pitiful strata-  
 gems. He reprinted his book at the Hague with a  
 London title, and with such a resemblance in the  
 form and number of the pages as gave it the appear-

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Colbatch in a MS. Reply to Bentley’s attack upon him, in the  
 year 1720, unequivocally confesses the merit of *Phileleutherus*.

<sup>18</sup> *A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of O——d, &c.*  
 London. 1767.



ance of an original edition, but with a few omissions and alterations in certain passages which Bentley had exposed as disgraceful to his character ; in order that future readers might believe him innocent of those charges<sup>19</sup>. He afterwards printed an edition with more alterations ; and in 1714 there appeared at the Hague, under his own inspection, a French translation of his ‘ Discourse,’ still professing to be printed at London, wherein further attempts were made to elude the force of the strictures to which he could not reply. All these artifices are detailed in a French book, published at Amsterdam many years afterwards, termed *Friponnerie Laique*, which contains also a translation of the remarks of *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*<sup>20</sup>. CHAP. XI.  
1713.

In the interval between the publication of the two parts of his ‘ Remarks,’ Bentley gave personal and deep offence to Lord Bolingbroke, the minister by whose influence it was commonly supposed that he Bentley gives offence to Lord Bolingbroke.

<sup>19</sup> It absolutely had this effect with Mr. Prichard, a gentleman of Ledbury, in Herefordshire, a disciple of the Free-thinker’s sect. Collins, in his wanton desire to insult Christianity, in his 90th page, translates a passage from Victor’s Chronicon—‘ Sancta Evangelia, tanquam ab idiotis Evangelistis composita, *the Holy Gospels, as written by IDIOT Evangelists.*’ Upon this shameful version Dr. Bentley remarks as follows : “ Ab Idiotis Evangelistis, *by Idiot Evangelists*; says our author ; who, if he’s sincere in this version, proves himself a very *Idiot* in the Greek and Latin acceptation of that word. *Ἰδιώτης, Idiota, illiteratus, indoctus, rudis.* See Du Fresne in his Glossaries ; who takes notice, that *Idiota* for an idiot or natural fool, is peculiar to your English law ; for which he cites Rastal. Did Victor, therefore, mean ‘ Idiot Evangelists’ in your English sense ? No : but illiterate, unlearned. What, then, must we think of our author for his scandalous translation here ? whether imputation will he choose to lie under ; that he knew the meaning of Victor, or that he knew it not ? ” — *Remarks*, p. 113. In the reprint mentioned in the text, Collins omitted the words *by idiot Evangelists*, and Mr. Prichard, who possessed that copy, and believed it to be the original, persuaded himself that this disgraceful translation was nothing but an impudent forgery of Bentley, invented to discredit his antagonist. There may be found in Nichols’s Literary Anecdotes, vol. ii. p. 673, an amusing correspondence on the subject between this gentleman and Professor Lort.

<sup>20</sup> See *Leland’s View of the Deistical Writers. Supplem.* p. 36.



CHAP. XI. 1713. was sheltered from his College prosecutors. This seemingly ill-timed collision occurred at the annual election of scholars from Westminster school to the two Colleges of Trinity and Christ-Church. The connection of the school with these two Royal foundations had already proved the source of jealousy between their Heads. Christ-Church influence had for some time predominated at Westminster, which was attributed to the Dean and Head-master both belonging to that society : and it had been resolved a few years before by a College decree at Trinity to maintain at the public charge the right of their Head to nominate the two masters of the school alternately with the Dean of Christ-Church. At the annual examination, which takes place before the two Heads, aided by an associate from each College, it is customary to elect, by alternate choice, to the foundations of those two societies seven or eight youths ready for the University : and, in order to preserve the equilibrium perfect, each college possesses the right of first option in the alternate years. In practice however there had been some deviation from this rule of equality, owing to the different constitution of the two colleges. The studentships of Christ-Church being permanent in tenure, and increasing in value according to standing, conduct their possessors to the full emoluments and preferments of the society without risk or trouble : the scholarships of Trinity, on the contrary, are tenable only till the standing of Master of Arts ; they entitle their holders to become candidates for fellowships ; but those higher objects are open to free competition, and are the rewards of merit. It followed therefore that the studentships were coveted as a more secure provision, and as exempt from the hazardous literary ordeal to be encountered by the scholars. And, since the society

Dec. 17,  
1707.



of Trinity never wished to gain unwilling members, it was common to allow those boys who had interest enough to obtain studentships, to become the Christ-Church option. At the election in 1713, Lord Bolingbroke had used his interest to secure a studentship for Robert Prior, a relation (perhaps a natural son) of the celebrated Matthew Prior, who was his most intimate friend, and at that moment confidential minister at the Court of France. But Bentley, happening to be entitled to priority of choice, defeated the object of the Secretary of State, by fixing upon this boy, though the ninth in place, as his first option; and, in spite of all remonstrances, remained obstinate in his resolution<sup>21</sup>. What could be the Master's motive for conduct so pointedly offensive to Lord Bolingbroke it is impossible to determine: he has been frequently accused of too great an attention to persons of power and influence; and it cannot be supposed that so able a diplomatist as the Secretary would have suffered him to remain ignorant of his wishes. It may be surmised that Bentley was piqued

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<sup>21</sup> This anecdote is told by Lord Bolingbroke himself in a letter to Prior, July 4, 1713.

“I am unfortunate in all my negotiations; at least in all those at home. At the last election at Westminster I endeavoured to have sent a very pretty lad, who wears your name, and therefore was entitled to my very best services, to Christ Church; but Bentley *pro solita humanitate sua*, leaped over eight boys to make this youth his first option, and remained with all the good breeding of a pedant inflexible.”—*Bolingbroke's Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 437.

Prior replies, July 13.

“I am obliged to you very particularly for your care of my friend Prior: I cannot imagine how you came to know that snudging boy, for his mother is very homely. Bentley will always be an ill-bred pedant; can the leopard change his skin? I hope you may never have any thing more essential to trouble you, than the disappointment of the boy's going to Trinity. I think I shall always have interest enough at Cambridge to make his stay there easy; and if he has the continuance of your patronage, I think too, matters cannot go so ill, but that in four years we may set him afloat in the world.”



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at the Minister for having just withdrawn the shield of power which protected him from his enemies : or he might attribute to Bolingbroke the disappointment of his hopes of preferment. In either case we know that his suspicions were erroneous ; as the jealousy of the Lord Treasurer allowed to his colleague no power of interference beyond his immediate department. But it seems unlikely that a person who knew the world so well as the Master of Trinity would have shown his resentment by petulant and ill-natured conduct. I am disposed therefore to think that he only intended a pointed assertion of his privileges against Atterbury, the Dean of Christ-Church ; who was at that moment nominated to succeed Bishop Sprat in the see of Rochester and deanery of Westminster ; preferments which, it may be added, were probable objects of ambition to Bentley himself<sup>22</sup>.

Bentley's  
answer to  
the articles.

To resume the long protracted case of the College prosecution :—all obstacles to the exercise of his judicial functions being at last removed, the Bishop of Ely demanded the answer of the Master of Trinity to the charges presented against him ; but not before he had taken the precaution of requiring that the petition and articles should be subscribed afresh by the accusers ; and it does not appear that any one of

<sup>22</sup> A pamphlet was written this year, evidently by some member of his College, containing a very bitter attack upon Dr. Bentley. It is called *An Answer to some objections that have been made to the conduct of Dr. B., together with a Dialogue between a Whig and Tory concerning the present State of the Case of Trinity College*. Its style is generally scurrilous ; but from it we learn (p. 8.) that the Master had lately been disappointed in his hopes of preferment, at which he expressed great indignation ; it is likewise said (p. 2.) that he was reported to have abused a noble person then in power.

It may be remarked that during the whole administration of the Earl of Oxford, in the distribution of Church preferment a glaring and unexampled partiality was shown in favour of the University of Oxford. In the course of the whole four years scarcely a Cambridge man was preferred.



the number declined to repeat his signature. Bentley met the storm with such an intrepid spirit as only the consciousness of innocence ought to inspire. He immediately complied with the Bishop's mandate by sending his reply to each of the 54 articles. The answers are brief, and sometimes laconic; and do little more than indicate the line of defence which he intended to adopt, when the cause should come to 'a full and personal hearing.' Many of the facts laid to his charge he acknowledges and justifies, asserting that they were not violations of the statutes: others he makes a subject of boast; as he had done in his printed letter, to which he frequently refers as his 'former answer.' To the various accusations of excessive and wasteful expenditure he replies that the objects were of a public nature, and that they had either been previously sanctioned or subsequently allowed by the Seniority. His tone is high and confident, and breathes the utmost contempt of his accusers. There is however no recurrence to the ground taken in his petition to the Queen, in which he disputed the jurisdiction of the Bishop: on the contrary, this answer commences with styling him 'Visitor,' and professes 'all submission to his Lordship's censure and sentence.'

This document, being sent to the Fellows, produced a 'representation' or 'replication' signed by counsel in their name, commenting upon each of the Master's answers, contending that some were 'insufficient,' others 'untrue,' and praying that the Visitor would compel him to give a fuller reply. This, like all the productions of Miller, was long and tedious.

Bentley rejoined by a short address to the Bishop, treating the 'representation' with severity and contempt; urging justly enough, that these successive rejoinders would not advance the case; that it was

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June 13.



CHAP. XI. 1713. unreasonable for him to be called upon to disprove the articles of accusation, before the accusers had adduced any proof in their support; and again calling, in a tone rather of command than supplication, for 'a final and personal hearing.'

This second reply being sent to the prosecutors, was followed by another rejoinder from Miller in their behalf, complaining of Dr. Bentley's refusal to put in a fuller answer; and begging the Visitor's order that they might inspect the College books in the Master's custody for the purpose of substantiating their charges.

Attempt to  
terminate  
the proceed-  
ings.

These proceedings, which were in truth only formal preliminaries, protracted the business till August; when Dr. Bentley made an effort to put an end to this vexatious affair by one of those stratagems which his genius was ever ready to suggest. He proposed to some of the prosecutors that the Visitor should be petitioned by both parties to come over to Cambridge, where, from the facility of examining the registers and account-books, and by personal inquiries on the spot, he might be enabled to come to a prompt decision upon the case. The suggestion was eagerly embraced by several of the Fellows, as calculated to obviate further delay and expense, and put a termination to a state of things which appeared ruinous to the college. Eleven of the prosecutors had actually subscribed their names to a petition for this purpose, when it was remarked that Miller, to whom the whole conduct of the cause had been intrusted, was still upon the circuit; that it would take a long time to make a thorough examination of the books; that nothing was yet in readiness; and consequently that, if the prayer were complied with, and the trial immediately commenced, an acquittal must follow as a matter of course from the want of evidence. Accord-



ingly, no more of the Fellows added their names to what they conceived a stratagem to overreach them : Bentley however not despairing of success, sent the petition to Ely with the signatures already obtained, by the hands of Professor Cotes. But Bishop Moore, being determined to fortify his own judgment by the first legal assistance, had engaged as his assessors Lord Cowper, the ex-chancellor, and Dr. Newton, an eminent civilian. He replied therefore that he intended to try the cause in London, as the place where both parties might most conveniently provide the assistance of counsel, and that the trial would take place in November, if the engagements of his assessors permitted <sup>23</sup>.

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1713.  

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The  
Bishop's as-  
sessors.

The Bishop having declared that he meant to take the evidence in the form of affidavits, the month of October was spent by Miller and the other prosecutors in preparing proofs from the College books, and in drawing up depositions. No less than twenty-seven affidavits were sworn against the party accused ; nor does it appear that any one of the complainants relented, or declined to maintain upon oath the charges to which he had affixed his signature.

The society was destined however to experience more of the law's delay, and the prolonged evils of dissension and confusion. At this time the unsettled state of public affairs, the violence of opposition, the growing feuds between the principal ministers, the precarious state of the Queen's health, and the apprehensions respecting the succession, occupied every mind with intense interest ; while the avocations of the judge, the assessors, and the advocates furnished continual reasons for postponing the affairs of Trinity

<sup>23</sup> A detailed account of these and some subsequent proceedings is given in the Journal of Mr. Rud, who was in College at the time.



CHAP. XI. College. Nor was it till the month of May, 1714,  
1714. that the trial of Dr. Bentley actually commenced.

During this agitating interval, when his fortune and character were at stake, our critic solaced the hours of suspense by undertaking a new edition of Terence. Of all the Latin writers this comedian was his favourite : and his peculiar insight into the comic metres, a subject which other scholars had abandoned as hopeless, enabled him to correct a prodigious number of passages, and to throw new light upon the author. But the overwhelming anxiety occasioned by the approaching trial prevented his bringing the work to a termination <sup>24</sup>.

Trial at Ely-  
House.

When the long expected day arrived, the large hall at Ely-House was converted into a court of justice, where written evidence was produced in support and refutation of the 54 articles against the Master of Trinity College. The counsel for the prosecution were Sir Peter King, Sir John Cheshyre, Mr. Serjeant Page, Mr. Miller, and Dr. Paul the civilian. Those employed by the Master were the Hon. Spencer Compton (afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons, and Earl of Wilmington), Mr. Lutwych, and Dr. Andrews the civilian. As the nature of the cause partook both of the common and the civil law, it was arranged that two gentlemen of the former and one of the latter profession should speak on each side upon the respective heads of accusation. Of all these learned advocates it is probable that Mr. Miller alone was sufficiently master of the case, involving as it did most of the statutes, as well as the details of College history for above ten years. His familiarity with the

<sup>24</sup> That Bentley was at this period occupied with preparing an edition of Terence, I discover from a letter of the Abbé Bignon, Jan. 12, and of Kuster, Jan. 16, 1714.



business in all its bearings must have rendered him a formidable adversary <sup>25</sup>. CHAP. XI.  
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The articles embraced almost all material parts of Bentley's College administration: in the account already given of those transactions I have been careful to consult the original records, as well as to compare and balance the statements of the contending parties, and particularly the briefs or instructions for the management of this case drawn up by Miller and Bentley themselves, which contain the heads of the arguments, as well as of the evidence for supporting the accusation and defence on every article. Considering the fallible nature of human testimony, after a long interval has elapsed, and passion and prejudice have interposed, it is surprising to find so little disagreement respecting the substantial facts themselves. The colouring given to them forms the ground of controversy: what the accusers imputed to bad and criminal motives; the other party contended to have been innocent and praiseworthy.

The Master stood charged with the two offences of 'wasting the College goods,' and 'violating the statutes.' To the first class of articles he replied by proving in detail that the different expenses alleged to be 'wasteful,' had either been previously sanctioned or subsequently approved by the College council, consisting of the accusers themselves. This con-

<sup>25</sup> In a loose paper which I found in the Treasury of Trinity College, there is the following account of the performances of four of these gentlemen. The writer seems to be some Fellow who was present at the trial:

"*Spencer Compton.* He hath been heard to say afterwards, that he never was so ashamed of any cause in his life.

"*Sir J. Cheshyre.* He used Dr. B. very much in his own way.

"*Serj. Page.* He hummed, and hawed, and stumbled; so that his clients were very much ashamed of him.

"*Mr. Miller.* Was very exact in dates and quotations, but otherwise but dull and heavy."



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currence of the Seniors, although it might disqualify them from becoming complainants, could not exempt the Master from censure: it was a better apology, that the principal sums which he was charged with lavishing had been expended in the repairs and ornament of the fabric, and other public objects: such expenditure might indeed have been greater than was necessary, but could not be termed ‘dilapidatio bonorum Collegii.’ The other class of charges he met by showing that some of the acts with which he was charged contradicted no statute, however opposite they might be to custom and precedent. Still there remained several, (particularly the issuing and enforcing his decrees without approbation of the Seniority), which plainly convicted him of exercising a power beyond the law. Each instance, if considered by itself, will rather be thought to call for the admonition of a Visitor than to be a sufficient ground for expulsion. But when all the matters proved against him are impartially reviewed, they must convince us that Dr. Bentley was actuated by too arbitrary a spirit to brook any restraint upon his authority, and that he would never suffer the statutes, customs, or even the interests of his society to stand in the way of any favourite project. His conduct in the deprivation of Miller was rather that of an Asiatic despot than of the responsible Head of a liberal society: and his insulting expressions towards some of the Fellows, which he avowed and attempted to justify, showed how little chance there was of his ever submitting to be controlled by persons whom he held in such supreme contempt.

At the commencement of the trial public opinion was greatly in favour of the accused. He was acknowledged to be the most learned scholar that this country could boast, and had recently proved himself a power-



ful defender of revealed religion. In his college he had stood forward as the promoter of industry, learning, and discipline ; his moral character was unimpeached ; while his accusers were for the most part persons of no name or celebrity, and to some of them rumour attributed discreditable and immoral lives. There is strong reason to believe that Bishop Moore partook of the general impression, and that the Master had by some means obtained intimation of his judge's leaning in his favour. But in the progress of the trial his sentiments underwent a change ; for at one of the hearings when the Master was present, the Bishop expressed an opinion unfavourable to him. This unexpected shock was too much even for the firm mind and strong nerves of Dr. Bentley ; and he fainted away in the court<sup>26</sup>.

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1714.

Opinion of  
the Visitor  
unfavour-  
able to the  
Master.

The trial continued six weeks, and at the conclusion left an impression that judgment would be given against the Doctor<sup>27</sup>. In fact the Visitor, after

Orders a  
sentence of  
deprivation  
to be pre-  
pared.

<sup>26</sup> This remarkable fact is recorded by tradition. The truth of it is placed beyond a doubt by Cumberland, who mentions it among other anecdotes of his grandfather's life, and adduces it as a proof of the extraordinary sensibility of his nature. *Kippis's Biographia Britannica*, vol. ii. p. 243. See also *Noble's Continuation of Granger*, vol. iii. p. 102. A conversation between Judge Page and Dr. Colbatch some years after, preserved in Colbatch's MSS., refers to the same anecdote. The judge had witnessed the scene.

<sup>27</sup> The following letter was written at this crisis by Dr. Stubbe to Mr. Erasmus Lewis, the Under Secretary of State, who is well known, from the writings of Dean Swift, as the attached and confidential friend of the Lord Treasurer Oxford.

“ From Mr. Addison's, in Cook's Court, Lincoln's Inn, June 16, 1714.”

“ Dear Sir,

“ As you are a friend to Trinity College, I believe it will be no unwelcome news to tell you, that the cause draws towards a period ; for the Tryal ended at Ely-House Monday last ; and tho' the Bishop may be naturally given to procrastinate and mollify, yet we flatter ourselves (the crimes objected against Dr. Bentley having been proved in so public a manner) that it will not be in his Lordship's power either to suspend his sentence long, or to give any other but what will be agreeable to justice ; so that I must beg the favour of you to recollect what passed between us



CHAP. XI. consulting his assessors, was convinced that the case  
 1714. was made out against him, and accordingly ordered  
 a sentence to be drawn up of ejection from the  
 mastership. The process however was destined to  
 have a different result: Bishop Moore having caught  
 cold by his long sittings in the hall of Ely-House, an  
 illness ensued, which terminated fatally on the 31st  
 of July before he could pronounce judgment in this  
 long protracted cause.

Death of  
 Bp. Moore.

After the Bishop's death there was found among  
 his papers the sentence prepared against Dr. Bentley.  
 But a considerable doubt exists respecting his real  
 intentions; and there is much reason to believe that  
 he still entertained hopes of reconciling the conflict-  
 ing parties in the College, and that the sentence was  
 designed to compel the Master by terror to acquiesce  
 in such a settlement as he should propose, and that  
 it was only intended to be executed in case milder  
 methods were found ineffectual<sup>28</sup>.

about three years agoe upon this subject, if you have not quite forgot it.—  
 I promise you I am of the same mind I was then, and shall be glad to be  
 assured that you retain the same kind inclinations to lend me your helping  
 hand: I shall be proud of your directions in this affair, and to approve my-  
 self in this and every thing else, your most obliged humble servant, W. S.”

“ *For Erasmus Lewis, Esq. These.*”

From the above letter it might be supposed that Dr. Stubbe himself  
 was aspiring to succeed to the mastership of Trinity on the expected  
 deprivation of Dr. Bentley; but as it is hard to suppose that a person  
 whose age was at least seventy-five years could be smitten with such  
 ambition, I am disposed to think that his intended object was to apply to  
 the Government for some settlement of the disputed questions before a new  
 appointment was made. However this may be, the Lord Treasurer, who  
 was at this moment in the midst of a struggle to preserve his own power  
 against Lord Bolingbroke, had little leisure to attend to the wishes or  
 suggestions of Dr. Wolfran Stubbe; *acrior illum cura domat*. This  
 Lewis however, whom his friend Dean Swift styles ‘a cunning shaver,’  
 seems to have played double in the business, and to have sent this very  
 confidential letter of Stubbe's to Dr. Bentley, among whose papers I  
 found it.

<sup>28</sup> This statement of the probable intentions of Bishop Moore seems as  
 well authenticated as the nature of the case admits. Dr. Colbatch availed



This event, which relieved Dr. Bentley from the imminent peril in which he stood, was followed the next day by one of greater importance, the death of Queen Anne; whereby the sceptre was transferred to the house of Hanover, the ministers were ejected and proscribed, and a new aspect given to the political state of the country.

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1714.

Death of  
Queen  
Anne  
Aug. 1.

himself of all opportunities of making enquiries of those who conversed with him at the time, and fully believed the fact to have been as is stated in the text. The following is the decretory part of the sentence: " Quia per acta inactitata, deducta, allegata, exhibita, proposita, probata, pariter et confessata, comperimus luculenter et invenimus præfatas partes querelantes, et negotium hujusmodi promoventes, eorum intentionem in quibusdam articulis, sive libello supplici, aliisque propositis et exhibitis in hoc negotio datis exhibitis et admissis, penesque Registrum nostrum remanentibus deductam (quos quidem Articulos sive Libellum supplicem, ceteraque proposita et exhibita prædicta pro hic lectis et insertis habemus et haberi volumus) sufficienter et ad plenum (quod infra pronuntiandum) fundasse et probasse, nihilque effectuale per dictum Richardum Bentley vel ex parte sua fuisse aut esse in hoc negotio exceptum, deductum, allegatum, exhibitum, propositum, probatum, vel confessatum, quod intentionem dictarum partium querelantium, et negotium hujusmodi promoventium in hac parte elideret, seu quomodolibet enervaret: Idcirco nos, Joannes Episcopus Eliensis, Visitator antedictus, Christi nomine primitus invocato, et ipsum solum Deum oculis nostris proponentes et habentes, deque et cum consilio Assessorum nostrorum nobiscum assidentium, præfatum Richardum Bentley, Sacræ Theologiæ Doctorem, Collegii Sanctæ et Individuæ Trinitatis in oppido Cantabrigiæ prædictæ Magistrum coram nobis examinatum, bona dicti Collegii dilapidasse, et statuta ejusdem Collegii violasse pronunciamus, decernimus, et declaramus; Eundem igitur Richardum Bentley, sicut præfertur, coram nobis, Visitatore antedicto examinatum, et dilapidatione bonorum dicti Collegii coram nobis Visitatore prædicto convictum, propter præmissa officio suo Magistri Collegii prædicti privamus, ipsumque Richardum Bentley officio suo Magistri Collegii prædicti amovemus, per hanc nostram sententiam definitivam, sive hoc nostrum finale decretum, quam sive quod ferimus et promulgamus in his scriptis."



## CHAPTER XII.

*Bentley's reconciliation with his Fellows—Fleetwood, Bishop of Ely—Fresh attempt to vacate Miller's fellowship—Miller's Petition to the King—Articles of Accusation against the Master—Bishop Fleetwood refuses to take cognizance of them—Bentley's Charge to his Archdeaconry—Sherlock and Waterland—Vote of the Senate against Bentley rescinded—Thanks of the University voted to him—State of politics at Cambridge—King's present of the late Bishop Moore's Library to the University—'University Loyalty considered'—Bentley's Sermon on Popery—Attack upon the Sermon—Reply—Account of Dr. Colbatch—Bentley offers him the Vice-mastership—The Master's disposal of College Livings—Further measures against Miller—College leases—Colbatch applies to the Bishop of Ely—Archbishop Wake interests himself in favour of the Fellows—They Petition the King—Bentley's scheme of publishing the Greek Testament—Death of Cotes—Robert Smith—History and Death of Kuster—Biel—Correspondence on Hesychius—Project of Editions to be published by Bentley, 'in Usum Principis Frederici'—Schism in the Whig Ministry—Bentley turns out Miller by constables—Quarrels with Colbatch—Fellowship Election—Petition read in Council—Miller's Book on the University of Cambridge—'Humble and Serious Representation on the State of Trinity College'—Bentley carries an Address to the King—Waterland—Election of Vice-chancellor—Bentley's Visitation Charge.*

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THE premature termination of the suit against the Master of Trinity College, at the very moment when it was expected to end in his deprivation, afforded him an opportunity of retracing his steps, conciliating his Fellows, and retrieving the ground which he had lost in the good opinion of the public. It is impossible not to wish that he had profited by this warning; and that being now saved by his good fortune from immediate peril, he had confined himself to the strict path which his duty and his dignity prescribed. We find indeed that he did avail himself of the alteration of circumstances to effect the paci-



fication of his College, but it was done in a manner not calculated to secure the praise either of his own times or of posterity.

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The majority of the eight Senior Fellows, being harassed with domestic feuds which now appeared interminable, conceiving that they had already done their utmost to procure a redress of grievances, and thinking any alternative better than the anarchy and discord in which they had passed the last four years, listened readily to the first overtures for accommodation. Since the commencement of the proceedings in 1710, not less than six of the prosecutors had died: of the remainder some were weak and harmless men, far advanced in life, who only desired permission to pass the remnant of their days in tranquillity<sup>1</sup>.

Bentley's  
reconcilia-  
tion with his  
Fellows.

The see of Ely was supplied by Dr. Fleetwood, Bishop of St. Asaph, who had distinguished himself in the late reign by his learning, as well as by protesting against the conduct of the Tory government. Immediately on his nomination he declared that, if he visited Trinity College, it should be in the character of a General Visitor, to execute impartial justice on all delinquencies, whether of the Master or of the Fellows. This announcement produced a sudden effect upon two or three of the prosecutors, who had degraded their character and station by intemperate habits, which made them obnoxious to the censures of a Visitor. They accordingly entered into a compact with the Master, and declined joining in any further proceedings against him, while he, on his part, neither molested them, nor obstructed their interests. Hereupon he abandoned his scheme for dividends and compen-

Fleetwood,  
Bishop of  
Ely.

<sup>1</sup> Three of these had been intruded into the Society by the mandates of Charles II. and James II. See Chapter VII.



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sation, which had been the immediate cause of the late proceedings. The common object of the two parties, to prevent any external interference, was a sufficient cement of the union. Among those reconciled to the Master was Mr. Barwell, a person hitherto conspicuous for the violence of his hostility: he was in reality a timid man, shrinking from the slightest appearance of danger; a weakness of character which Bentley had already perceived, and availed himself of the discovery. The vice-mastership, vacant by the death of Dr. Smith, was now given to Mr. Modd, one of the oldest Fellows; the bursarship to Mr. Bathurst, though he was nearly incapable of its duties from infirmity of sight; and Mr. Hanbury, the individual whose intemperate habits the Master had most severely reprobated and published to the world, was made senior dean<sup>2</sup>.

Fresh attempt to vacate Miller's Fellowship.

Being convinced however that he could never enjoy his power in security or tranquillity, so long as his enemy Miller continued in the society, he resolved at all hazards to effect his removal. The former pretence for depriving him of his fellowship, that he was not a Doctor of Physic, seems to have met with such universal condemnation that he dared not revive it. But the statutes supplied him with a different ground in the following enactment. *Cap. VIII. "Statuimus præterea, si quis Sociorum, qui non sit Concionator, aut Discipulorum, sacerdotium aut prebendam cujuscunque summæ habuerit, aut si pensionem annuam, quæ summam decem librarum excesserit, aut possessiones aliquas hæreditarias dictam summam excedentes, aut stipendium pro toto vitæ suæ tempore duraturum, quod eandem summam superaverit, ut post annum Collegio amoveatur."* As Miller possessed an

<sup>2</sup> This is alluded to in *Middleton's Works*, vol. iii, p. 356.



estate of several hundreds a year, the Master had contended at the late trial that, upon the score of the above statute, he ought to be deprived of his fellowship. This plea furnished, of course, no justification of the step which had actually been taken. As it seemed however a fair statutable ground, Bentley, at the ensuing election, declared Miller's fellowship to be vacant on account of his property. To this the Seniority demurred, not being yet prepared to cashier their champion; but he obtained their acquiescence in a proposal which bespeaks all the subtilty of its author. It was agreed to elect provisionally David Humphreys, one of the candidates whom the Seniors were themselves desirous to admit into the society, to supply the place of Miller, in case his fellowship should be declared vacant by the King before the following July, the regular period for admission of Major-fellows.

The Seniors were probably glad of an expedient which took out of their jurisdiction so nice a question : the advantage obtained by Bentley will show itself in the sequel. Miller immediately preferred a petition to the Crown, praying for redress and protection. The words of the statute seemed to be plainly against him; but he urged, reasonably enough, that as they occurred in the chapter *De Concionatoribus*, they had always been considered to relate only to the Fellows on the clerical line; and had never before been put in force against the two laymen, who possessed no share in the advantages given by that very statute to their clerical brethren. It was besides evident that this measure was partial and personal; since the Master not only connived at others who were possessed of property, but had recently advised the Seniority not to accept the resignation of Mr. Greswold, who had succeeded to an estate of above a

Miller's petition to the King.



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Articles of  
accusation  
against the  
Master.

thousand a year, alleging that persons of property were beneficial members of the society.

The contest being now brought to such a point that one or other must be ejected, Miller, who was just advanced to the rank of Serjeant at Law, presented to the new Bishop of Ely a fresh set of articles, accusing the Master of wasting the goods and violating the statutes of his college, and calling upon the prelate to proceed as Visitor under the 40th statute. This new accusation differed little from that which had been laid before Bishop Moore: some of the trivial charges were dropped, and a few were added relating to occurrences of the last four years: but Miller finding it impossible to obtain as many signatures as before, subscribed them himself 'in the name and behalf of many of the Fellows.' Bishop Fleetwood declined taking cognizance of this accusation, alleging that he considered it unfair to visit the delinquencies of one member of the college, and not the rest; and, since the late Queen's counsel had decided that the general visitatorial power did not belong to the Bishop of Ely, he would not take upon himself to exercise such functions.

Bp. Fleetwood refuses to take cognizance of them.

Bentley's Charge to his Archdeaconry.

Just before this Bishop's accession to the diocese, Bentley, in the character of Archdeacon of Ely, had held a visitation of the clergy. They, like the majority of the parochial ministers throughout the kingdom, were of the Tory party, and many of them were observed to be backward in taking the oaths to the Government. The first proceedings of the new reign, the exclusion from office of almost all reputed friends of the Church, as well as the vindictive behaviour of the triumphant party, gave much disgust, and led to an opinion, that a throne supported by such measures could not be secure or permanent. The Archdeacon, who had all along expressed his



attachment to the Hanoverian Succession, endeavoured in his Charge to reconcile the minds of his brethren to the present settlement by force of argument. But in so doing his language fell far short of the loyalty of the Whigs, and raised a clamour against him from the zealots of the cause which he was advocating, notwithstanding that he bestowed all personal praise upon King George, terming him the Antoninus of his age. The following sentence of the Charge was particularly condemned as disrespectful to his Majesty: "It is hardly possible for a foreign prince to avoid several errors in government at his first coming amongst us; but I doubt not but that a little time will open his eyes, and then all will be well." So jealously were the words and actions of Bentley watched by his adversaries, that Serjeant Miller, who was a vehement and intolerant Whig, laid hold of this passage as matter of charge before the Bishop of Ely, and hoped to convict him of the crime *læsæ majestatis*, as a statutable ground of expulsion from his mastership<sup>3</sup>.

It will be recollected that, by a decree of the Senate two years before, Dr. Bentley was placed under the ban of the University. Circumstances now afforded him an opportunity of being reinstated with honour and éclat. In the course of the year 1714 the University acquired among its Heads two of the most illustrious divines that the Church of England can boast, Thomas Sherlock and Daniel Waterland; the former

Sherlock  
and Water-  
land.

<sup>3</sup> Middleton's *Full and Impartial Account of the Proceedings, &c.* 1719, Works, vol. iii. p. 295. MS. Copy of Serj. Miller's Articles against the Master of Trinity, December 1714. The writer of a pamphlet, called *University Loyalty Considered*, while he advocates Dr. Bentley in every thing, and maintains that his Charge comprised nothing really disrespectful to his Majesty, yet acknowledges that the common report of it had done him more harm than even his unfortunate Dedication to the Earl of Oxford, 'a man who soon after happened to be a knave.' p. 31.



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Vote of the  
Senate  
against  
Bentley re-  
scinded.

Dec. 21.

being made Master of Catherine Hall, and the latter of Magdalene College. They were both young men, distinguished by talent and erudition; and they exhibited, on their elevation, great aptitude for business, and discretion as well as activity, which speedily gave them influence and authority in the body. At the Public Commencement in this year, their theological disputation excited an uncommon sensation, not confined to the University: the subject was the question of Arian subscriptions; Waterland being the respondent, and Sherlock the opponent. The unusual circumstance of a public debate between two Heads of Houses, the general interest of the topic, and still more the learning, ingenuity, and fluency of the combatants, made a great and lasting impression. Sherlock having become Vice Chancellor, Dr. Bentley, and his Official, Dr. Brookbank, submitted to his arbitration the whole question in dispute between the Archdeacon of Ely and the University, relative to the probates of wills, 'to be by him equitably and amicably decided<sup>4</sup>.' Accordingly the Vice Chancellor, after an examination of the charters, records, and registers, drew up a distinct statement of the different descriptions of persons to the probates of whose wills the University was entitled: whereupon the Official subscribed an engagement never to interfere with those claims, and the Archdeacon ratified the concession in the name of himself and his successors. Those documents being published to the Senate in a convocation, were immediately followed by a grace, cancelling and annulling the late resolu-

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Sherlock, during this year of office, compiled a manuscript book upon the Property, Rights, Privileges, and Customs of the University. This valuable document is said to have been lost by a Vice Chancellor some years ago: a copy of it, however, is preserved in Cole's MSS. vol. xxi. p. 237.



tion, by which the Archdeacons of Ely and their Officials were excluded from the office of Vice Chancellor; and the repeal was next day voted by the body with the same unanimity as the censure<sup>5</sup>.

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The zeal of Bentley's friends did not rest satisfied with restoring him to all the privileges of his station: it was resolved to mark the public sense of his merits by honours of a signal and unusual nature. At the next meeting of the Senate, Mr. Waterland, supported by Professor Cotes and Mr. Bull, a Fellow of Queen's, carried up the following grace, which was voted unanimously by the Caput and the two Houses:

Thanks of  
the Univer-  
sity voted  
to him.

Jan. 4, 1715.

“Whereas the Reverend Dr. Bentley, Master of Trinity College, besides his other labours published from our press, to the great advancement of learning and honour of this University, has lately, under the borrowed name of *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*, done eminent service to the Christian Religion, and the Clergy of England, by refuting the objections and exposing the ignorance of an impious set of writers, that call themselves Freethinkers—May it please you that the said Dr. Bentley, for his good services already done, have the public thanks of the University; and be desired by Mr. Vice Chancellor, in the name of the whole body, to finish what remains of so useful a work<sup>6</sup>.”

It is necessary to notice and refute an attempt made to disparage this high honour conferred upon our critic, by a pretence that the Senate had been surprised into the resolution. This is the assertion of Middleton, who declares that the whole was the result of artifice and management, that the design ‘was only whispered to three or four friends,’ that

<sup>5</sup> This resolution for cancelling the former penal grace was executed more literally than could have been designed by the Senate: for it was erased from the Register-book with such determined diligence, that it never could have been deciphered. However, a copy of it was preserved by Atwood, the Esquire Beadle, in his Diary, from whence it was transcribed by Cole, in his multifarious collection.

<sup>6</sup> University Grace Book; Rud's Diary; Atwood's Diary.



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1716-17.

‘it was passed as silently and clandestinely as possible,’ and that the scandal it gave was the occasion of a decree soon after, ‘that no business should be completed except in two congregations’.<sup>7</sup> Now the fact is that the motion was made with unusual pomp; and, as it passed without one dissenting voice, it is difficult to imagine that any length of notice could have procured its rejection. That it was voted at a single congregation is no proof of artifice; this was not uncommon at the time; and, although the decree to which Middleton alludes was judicious and proper, yet it could not have had reference, as he pretends, to this vote of thanks to Bentley, since it was not made till above two years afterwards. Neither of the two Diary-writers who record the circumstance, though present on the spot and sufficiently ill-disposed to our hero, mentions a belief of artifice or the existence of any dissatisfaction. And the person answerable for the management, had there been any, was Sherlock, the Vice Chancellor, who can never be reckoned among the friends of the Master of Trinity.

I am not able to justify Dr. Bentley’s omission to comply with a request, thus publicly preferred and accompanied with all the circumstance of honour. The part of Collins’ book which remained unanswered consisted indeed of little more than quotations, and afforded no exercise for the critic’s sagacity, except the exposure of blunders in translation and perversion of the meaning of the original; of both which delinquencies the Freethinker had already been satisfactorily convicted. But the completion of the work was now become due to the University; and for his neglect of this honourable debt neither the pressure

<sup>7</sup> Middleton’s *Full and Impartial Account*, &c. Works, vol. iii. p. 292.



of other business, nor his constitutional habit of procrastination, can excuse him.

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The political feelings prevalent in the Universities are, in ordinary cases, not much regarded by the Government or the public. But at particular and critical times, the sentiments expressed by the academical bodies have been observed to influence those of a great part of the nation. Thus in the reign of James the Second they gave the first demonstration of resistance to the attempts of that monarch against the establishments and liberties of the country; an example which was speedily and happily followed. In the memorable year 1710, the public reception of Dr. Sacheverell by the University of Oxford added weight and consequence to that popularity, which was soon felt with tremendous effect by his prosecutors. And at the present crisis, when the new King was imperfectly established on his throne, and when a party, whose extent could not be ascertained, showed symptoms of a design to restore the house of Stuart, the sentiments of the University became of much importance, as giving a tone to those of the Church and of a considerable part of the aristocracy. At Oxford a strong demonstration of Jacobite principles was made by the senior part of the body; who, upon their Chancellor, the Duke of Ormond, openly embarking in the service of the Pretender, testified their unaltered attachment to him by choosing his brother, the Earl of Arran, to hold his station; while the excesses of the students, said to be unchecked and permitted by their superiors, occasioned the Government to send a military force to keep them in subjection. At Cambridge there prevailed a spirit of a different kind, which it is necessary to explain, since a vulgar error has represented this University as the head-quarters of Whig politics. That a great majority

State of politics at Cambridge.



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of the members were of the Tory party at the accession and throughout the reign of George the First, will satisfactorily appear to the enquirer. At the General Election in 1715, the Tory representatives were re-elected ; and in all subsequent struggles, by which the strength of the parties can be estimated, that interest maintained a majority of at least two to one. It is however equally certain that only a small proportion of the High-church party at Cambridge were Jacobites ; and thus far the case appears to have differed from that of the sister University. The Non-jurors were not numerous, and appear to have shown no disposition to disturb the government which they declined to acknowledge. But on the night of the Pretender's birth-day, and again on that of King George, disturbances did take place through some young men, who had either imbibed Jacobite principles, or thoughtlessly availed themselves of those occasions for juvenile licence : some windows were broken, and some cries were heard of ' No Hanover.' But the excesses, being few and trivial, were censured by the Vice Chancellor as ordinary breaches of discipline, without reference to their political tendency. This conduct of Sherlock and the other Heads, even as represented by an enemy, seems to have been highly judicious : and the advice of the party who called for signal and extraordinary punishments, had it been followed, would probably have been attended with consequences destructive of the peace and credit of the University.

Aug. 10.

These disturbances being represented in an exaggerated light, and tumults occurring about the same time in various parts of the country, which were considered as the harbingers of rebellion, an address to the King was voted by the Senate ; wherein they assure his Majesty of their zeal and attachment to his person



and government, and their uneasiness at the danger which threatened them, ‘a danger affecting not only the present age, but the latest posterity:’ declaring that, as they had constantly acknowledged King George to be the only lawful and rightful heir to the throne, it was impossible for them ever to forget their duty and join in treason; reminding the King of his promise that the constitution in Church and State should be the only rule of his government; and in conclusion assuring him that, ‘whatever representations had been made to their prejudice, they did and would so instruct the youth, that they might show in their conduct an example of those principles of loyalty and obedience, which this University, *pursuing the doctrines of our Church*, has ever steadily maintained.’

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This avowal of a determination to uphold the title of the Hanover family upon Church of England principles was immediately followed by a noble exercise of Royal munificence. The King, at the suggestion of Lord Viscount Townshend, purchased the library of the late Bishop Moore, one of the best in the kingdom, for 6000*l.*, and presented it to the University of Cambridge. This collection, valuable not only for its extent (being about 30,000 volumes), but for the rarity of its treasures, both printed and manuscript, is the greatest benefaction which Cambridge ever yet received. The gratitude of the University for this signal generosity was expressed in an address to the King, and another to the Minister; in both of which we find specimens of that glowing eloquence frequently conspicuous in the writings of Dr. Sherlock <sup>8</sup>.

King's present of the late Bishop Moore's library to the University.

<sup>8</sup> On this occasion was written the well-known epigram of some Oxonian wit :

“ King George observing with judicious eyes  
The state of both his Universities,



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'University  
Loyalty  
Consider-  
ed.'

Just at this time appeared a tract called 'University Loyalty Considered;' written by an ardent Whig, who was indignant at not finding in others that zealous attachment to the new King, which he professed himself: he would show no quarter to Tories or High-churchmen, but insinuates his wish for the restoration of Whiston, and the abolition of all proceedings against propagators of heretical opinions. It would be idle to criticise a party pamphlet written at a moment of feverish excitement: but the notice of it is necessary; since the author devotes almost half his pages to the praise of Dr. Bentley, whom he deems the first character in the University, and recommends as the most deserving of preferment in the Church; and after having divided his work between the praise of the Monarch, and the praise of the Master, subscribes himself by the appropriate, but not very decorous, title of *Philo-Georgius et Philo-Bentleius*. From this production of his friend, whoever he might be, we find that Bentley had by this time identified himself with the Whig party; and some share of the animosity with which we shall find him treated in the University, may be attributed to this dereliction of the side which he had embraced in the late reign<sup>9</sup>.

To Oxford sent a troop of horse; and why?

That learned body wanted loyalty.

To Cambridge books he sent, as well discerning

How much that loyal body wanted learning."

The retort, by Sir William Browne, founder of the prizes for odes and epigrams, though ingenious, must be confessed to be inferior in wit and satire to the original:

"The King to Oxford sent a troop of horse,

For Tories own no argument but force;

With equal skill to Cambridge books he sent,

For Whigs admit no force but argument."

<sup>9</sup> 'University Loyalty Considered; in a Letter to a Gentleman at Cam-



Shortly afterwards the flames of rebellion blazed forth in Scotland, and in the North of England. The celebration of the 5th of November occurred at the very crisis of danger from the civil war undertaken to place a popish monarch upon the throne. On that day Dr. Bentley, with a spirit worthy of his character, delivered from the University pulpit at St. Mary's his

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Bentley's  
Sermon on  
Popery.

*bridge.* London, 1715.' For the politics of this writer, the following specimen will suffice :

“ 'Tis certain that even the University magistrates would be better subjects than they are, if they were but half as good as those they think fit to punish for being bad ones. If they would be thought so, let them exert themselves with the utmost rigour against those that are otherwise. To that end, let them banish all party-talk, as well as party-papers, from the coffee-houses. Let the dead be forgotten, rather than that the memory of a good Queen shall obstruct your affection to a better King. Let it be as punishable to insinuate treason as to speak it. Let your public orations be in praise of the present Administration ; and if the Orator expatiates on the virtues of King George, let him be no longer hissed at and ridiculed.” P. 22.

Of his panegyric on Dr. Bentley, I select these sentences :

“ As to the first of them, it is not denied by any judicious persons, that he's a man of such a consummate merit, as should entitle him to as much encouragement as is due to the most learned man in the age. On this account, 'tis well known that it is not for want of abilities, that he is not so serviceable as he might be to the Church.”—“ He is so well versed in these (parts of learning) that you'll be of my mind, if I venture to affirm, that whoever is a master of any one of them in as high a degree as he is master of them all, is sure to be accounted a very great man, in the judgment of such as don't give way to prejudice. I cannot give the gentleman I'm speaking of a higher nor indeed a juster encomium, than by confessing that Sir Isaac Newton is not a greater philosopher, than he is a universal scholar. Upon these grounds I persuade myself that he knows as much as it is morally possible for any one man to know of every thing ; this at least I can say of him, that he has made such a perfect proficiency in all parts of the most valuable literature, that no other genius but the same that carried him so far, can carry him farther.”—“ Can you suppose then, that in such good times any thing can obstruct this gentleman's promotion, except his own deficiency in an affection for such as have it in their power to promote him ? But, for the world to impute this to him, is to determine his reputation by the reports of such as make it their game and pastime to ruin him. Because he's a man of a great soul, of an innate authority, and a very majestic air, many have therefore taken an antipathy against him as a man that's high-minded.” P. 25, &c.

The above passages, as well as some others in this tract, savour strongly of irony.



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celebrated Sermon on Popery. This remarkable composition, which combines the learning, clearness of conception, and force of language that distinguish its author, unmask the papal system, and details its history with admirable success. Its originality of style and mixture of learning and argument, not unaccompanied with eloquence, have secured for it a fate very different from that of other sermons on the same anniversary : it continues, and will ever continue to be read, with an interest inferior only to that which it must have excited, when pronounced from the pulpit, aided by the advantages of a powerful voice and impressive delivery. He opens the discourse rather in his character of a critic than a preacher, by explaining the full force of the original words in his text, (2 Cor. ii. 17.) Οὐ γάρ ἐσμεν ὡς οἱ πολλοὶ, καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ—and showing the inadequacy of our translation—*For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God.* His commentary upon the words καπηλεύοντες τ. λ. τ. Θ., the full notion of which is, *trafficking in the word of God for their own lucre*, is clear and satisfactory, raises the force of the passage, and makes it apply to the spirit of Popery ; whose various institutions, from its first growth in the Church, are all found to have had the same intent and effect. The enumeration of these corruptions begins with one suggested by the philological commentary that had preceded ; the papists—‘ enhancing the authority of the vulgar Latin over that of the Greek original : so that we must search for St. Paul’s meaning here, not in the notion of καπηλεύοντες, but of *adulterantes* ; not of οἱ πολλοὶ, but of *multi* without its article ; an original defect in the Latin tongue.’ He goes on to expose the different inventions of monasteries, of relicks and images, of pilgrimages and crusades, of papal infallibility, of



purgatory, of indulgences and pardons, of the celibacy of the clergy, and at length by slow degrees, of transubstantiation. The language is as plain as the reasoning is forcible; 'till his spirit rising with his subject, and apparently compelled by the indignation to which it gave birth, he bursts into a strain of eloquence of which very few instances can be found in his compositions :

“ I might now go on to show you a more dismal scene of impostures, *judicia Dei*, the judgments of God, as they blasphemously called them, when no human evidence could be found : their trials by ordeal ; by taking a red-hot iron in the hand ; by putting the naked arm into hot boiling water ; by sinking or swimming in pools and rivers, when bound fast hand and foot ; all of them borrowed or copied from pagan knavery and superstition ; and so manageable by arts and slights, that the party could be found guilty or innocent, just as the priests pleased, who were always the tryers. What bribes were hereby procured ? what false legacies extorted ? what malice and revenge executed ? on all which if we should fully dilate and expatiate, the intended tragedy of this day, which now calls for our consideration, would scarce appear extraordinary. Dreadful indeed it was, astonishing to the imagination ; all the ideas assemble in it of terror and horror. Yet, when I look on it with a philosophical eye, I am apt to felicitate those appointed for that sudden blast of rapid destruction ; and to pity those miserables that were out of it, the designed victims to slow cruelty, the intended objects of lingering persecution. For, since the whole plot (which will ever be the plot of Popery) was to subdue and enslave the nation, who would not choose and prefer a short and despatching death, quick as that by thunder and lightning, which prevents pain and perception, before the anguish of mock trials, before the legal accommodations of gaols and dungeons, before the peaceful executions by fire and faggot ? Who would not rather be placed direct above the infernal mine, than pass through the pitiless mercies, the salutary torments of a popish Inquisition ; that last accursed contrivance of atheistical and devilish politic ? If the other schemes have appeared to be the shop, the warehouse of Popery ; this may be justly called its slaughter-house and its shambles. Hither are haled poor creatures (I should have said *rich*, for that gives the frequentest suspicion of heresy) without any accuser, without allegation of any fault. They must inform against themselves, and make confession of something heretical ; or else undergo the discipline of the various tortures : a regular system



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of ingenious cruelty, composed by the united skill and long successive experience of the best engineers and artificers of torment. That savage saying of Caligula's, horrible to speak or hear, and fit only to be writ in blood, *Ita feri, ut se mori sentiat*, is here heightened and improved: *Ita se mori sentiat, ut ne moriatur*, say these merciful Inquisitors. The force, the effect of every rack, every agony, are exactly understood: this stretch, that strangulation is the utmost nature can bear; the least addition will overpower it: this posture keeps the weary soul hanging upon the lip; ready to leave the carcass, and yet not suffered to take its wing: this extends and prolongs the very moment of expiration; continues the pangs of dying without the ease and benefit of death. O pious and proper methods for the propagation of Faith! O true and genuine Vicar of Christ, the God of mercy, and the Lord of peace!"—*Bentley's Sermons*, p. 364, 6th ed.

Sterne's  
plagiarism.

Perhaps some readers who are not aware of having ever perused Dr. Bentley's Sermon on Popery, may, nevertheless, recollect the latter part of the above quotation. If so, it is in the novel of *Tristram Shandy* that they have met with this passage, purloined almost *verbatim* by the sentimental plagiarist Sterne, whose literary thefts have long been notorious. The present instance is the more curious, as this happens to form the very part of the sermon read by Corporal Trim, which so overpowers the feelings of the sympathetic soldier, that he declares 'he would not read another line of it for all the world <sup>10</sup>.'

Attack upon  
the sermon.

This discourse, being printed, had the common fate of Bentley's publications, in giving birth to a controversy. It was attacked by one Cummins, a Calvinistic dissenter, who was possessed with an excessive animosity against the clergy of the Establishment: he seems to have made it the subject of a tirade, merely on account of its author's celebrity. His objects were, first to accuse the English clergy of the same insincerity which Bentley charges against the Papists, particularly in their preaching the doctrine of universal redemption, after having subscribed the

<sup>10</sup> *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, vol. ii. chap. 17.



39 Articles, which, he contends, countenance his own notions of partial redemption, and absolute predestination : secondly, to insinuate that the great body of them were favourable to the Pretender ; a charge which, as applied to the principal object of his attack, was notoriously contrary to the fact. Of criticism Cummins speaks in terms of contempt which only prove his own ignorance ; and the deplorable work which he himself makes in his interpretations, wherever he differs from Bentley, proves the importance of that learning which he wishes to decry. This pamphlet partakes of the high and presumptuous spirit which the marked countenance of Government, and the cloud hanging over the High-church party, had given to the dissenters. After a considerable interval of time there appeared an elaborate reply, written by some friend of the Doctor's, as much for the purpose of praising him, as of confuting his adversary ; who, in truth, was scarcely worthy of that trouble. This tract, which concludes with a laboured defence of the doctrine of universal redemption, displays no inconsiderable acquaintance with polemical divinity<sup>11</sup>.

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Reply.

In reverting to the affairs of Trinity College, it now is necessary to introduce to the particular acquaintance of the reader a personage, who will make a prominent figure in the remainder of this history. Of all the Fellows of the College, Dr. JOHN COLBATCH stood the highest in reputation, both as a scholar and a divine : unlike the generality of his

Account of  
Dr. Col-  
batch.

<sup>11</sup> *Reflections on the Scandalous Aspersions on the Clergy, by the author of the Remarks on Dr. Bentley's Sermon on Popery, 1717.* I find it somewhere asserted that the author of these reflections was Bentley himself ; which nobody can believe, who reads half a page of the pamphlet. There are several references to manuscripts in the library of Corpus Christi College, from which we might infer that the writer was a member of that society.



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brethren, he had lived much in the world, and possessed an acquaintance among persons of rank and consideration. He had passed nearly seven years, from his first entering into Orders, as chaplain to the Factory at Lisbon, and had, at the desire of Bishop Burnet, written an account of the state of religion and literature in that country; which being shown to Queen Mary, produced much applause, along with assurances from her Majesty of providing for the author. At the earnest request of the same prelate, accompanied with promises of preferment, he left his situation in Portugal, worth about 200*l.* a year, to become private tutor to his eldest son, Gilbert Burnet, who was designed for Trinity College. Colbatch, however, was destined to experience in a higher degree that description of patron which Dr. Johnson enumerates among the ‘ills of a scholar’s life.’ He had been desirous of quitting his fellowship, but was persuaded, greatly against his inclination, to continue in College till the Bishop of Salisbury’s son had completed his education: but in 1701, one year before the expiration of that term, the famous Duke of Somerset, Chancellor of the University, having placed his eldest son, the Earl of Hertford, at Trinity, applied to Colbatch to undertake the care of his tuition. For this however he was indebted to the recommendation of Dr. Bentley; and by the joint authority of Bishop Burnet and the Master, he undertook a charge which, they contended, was certain to procure for him high advancement in his profession. For two years he devoted himself with much labour to the education of the young patrician; and then discovered that the noble Chancellor was more sparing of remuneration than became the head of an University, and the official patron of learning. His Grace, however, was so well pleased with Colbatch’s services,



that he used his persuasions to induce him to continue tutor to his son during his travels, promising to provide for him in the Church, and to continue his salary, 100*l.* a year, till such provision was realized. Accordingly, he accompanied the young Earl abroad, devoted two more years to his service, and became his instructor in the French and Italian, as well as the classical languages ; but just before the period when his services were no longer required, he was recalled by the Duke with some expressions of displeasure, for which no intelligible reason could be assigned : the promises of present and future provision were forgotten and disclaimed ; and he was dismissed with the bare proportion of his salary, which, after deducting the expenses he had incurred, left him a remuneration less in amount than the wages of a common footman, as a return for the most important services which one man can render to another. On experiencing such harsh treatment from a person who was every way his debtor, Colbatch made proper remonstrances ; and the Master interfered in a manner which did him honour. But the result of Bentley's representations to the Duke was only the vindication of the tutor from the reflections made, or pretended to have been made, upon him : to all claims upon his gratitude or justice he turned a deaf ear. Thus Colbatch returned to College at the age of forty, having derived from the labour of his best years no other reward than a prebend of Salisbury, given to him by the Bishop, which did not exceed 20*l.* a year ; that prelate conceiving himself relieved by the Duke from the obligation of giving him better preferment. Possibly, the well-known violence of Burnet's party prejudices might have disinclined him to a person whose politics, although moderate, were of the Tory cast. Colbatch, in speaking of this



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treatment some years afterwards, observes, that ‘ the hardships which he suffered, were aggravated by some circumstances which must lie infinitely heavier, and sink deeper into an ingenuous mind, than any temporal loss or inconvenience whatsoever.’ The University however showed a better sense of his merit than those two great patrons ; in 1707 he was elected Professor of Casuistry, and delivered lectures on Moral Philosophy with much reputation. He joined to other learning an uncommon acquaintance with the Civil and the Canon Law, and with writers upon those subjects. For a number of years, no member of the University was more looked up to as a conscientious and exemplary person, zealous for the promotion of study and discipline, and remarkable for disinterested and public spirit. It was from an opinion of this character, that he retained throughout life an extensive influence, both among the old and the young; notwithstanding his rigid and inflexible principles, which made even one of his friends admit that his ‘ virtue was by some deemed too severe <sup>12</sup>.’ We may further remark that he possessed the pen of a ready writer, and a style which was always perspicuous, and, whenever he chose, caustic and severe.

Conduct of  
Colbatch in  
College.

Such a person as I have described, was qualified to be either a powerful supporter, or a formidable adversary, to the Head of his Society. We find that Colbatch attached himself for a considerable time to Bentley; being moved partly by gratitude for his behaviour in the affair of his patrons, and partly by a sense of the importance of subordination to the Supe-

<sup>12</sup> Middleton’s *Account of the Present State of Trinity College, &c.* Works, vol. iii. p. 358. Whiston speaks of him in terms of a similar import: “ Now this Dr. Colbatch was my particular friend, and a person of great learning, and regard to the severest discipline, and of the strictest virtue: though that virtue seemed to have somewhat of the disagreeable.”—*Whiston’s Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 356.



rior. He warmly advocated all his regulations for the promotion of order and learning, and whatever else conduced to the credit of the college; while he endeavoured by the influence of friendship, to divert him from such measures as he conceived blameable or unstatutable. When at length a prosecution of the Master was in agitation, Colbatch, as we have already noticed, recommended a milder course, and suggested such an appeal as might lead to the decision of all the points of difference by a Visitor. He always retained an opinion, that had his advice been followed at that time, before matters were worse embroiled, and while the union of the Fellows was unbroken, a settlement of the College might have been effected by authority, and all the consequent distractions prevented. But the violent counsels of Miller prevailing, he concurred in what he deemed the only method left for bringing on a visitation, and subscribed the Petition to the Bishop of Ely: in so doing, however, he and two of his friends specified that their prayer extended only to the settlement of the points in dispute.

It may be observed that Colbatch entertained a distrust and a bad opinion of Miller, and was always reluctant to make common cause with him. Shortly after the publication of the latter's pamphlet against Bentley, a scheme being on foot to reverse the interpretation of the statutes respecting the option of chambers and livings, Dr. Colbatch wrote a very able tract upon that question, upholding the prior right of Doctors and Bachelors of Divinity, and refuting the arguments of Miller. Copies of this piece were dispersed among the Fellows, and seem to have produced as general an acquiescence as could be expected upon such a topic; nor do we hear of the question being again controverted in the mastership of Dr. Bentley.

During the period of anarchy in College, while the



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prosecution was depending, Dr. Colbatch took little or no part with either of the conflicting factions : but he joined in petitioning Bishop Moore, in the autumn of 1713, that he would put an end to this state of distraction, by a summary hearing and decision of the case at Cambridge. Coming now into the governing part of the society, his sense of duty compelled him to oppose the Master in a measure respecting a piece of College land in the North of England <sup>13</sup>. In February

<sup>13</sup> This business, to which Dr. Colbatch attributed more importance than it deserved, was as follows : A piece of land at Kirby Kendal, in Westmoreland, had become escheated to the College, as Lords of the Manor, by the forfeiture of a felon. The rent was less than 4*l.* a year, and it was incumbered with a mortgage of 36*l.* Bentley promised to convey this land to Mr. Lambert, the principal tenant of the College, who had been at the trouble and expense of the prosecution, for a small consideration. It was necessary that the conveyance should receive the College seal, affixed in the presence of the sixteen senior Fellows. On the deed being produced before them, Colbatch objected that such an alienation was contrary both to the Law of the Land, and the statutes of the College, and would involve all who consented to it in the penalties of perjury and the loss of their station : whereupon it was unanimously rejected. This was in January 1713. In November following the Master, constant to his purpose, and hoping that the opposition had now subsided, sent them the deed again with certain alterations, imposing on the purchaser a perpetual rent of four shillings. But the sixteen again refused their consent ; one of the number, Mr. Whitfield, a zealous friend of the Master, went out and carried the news of this determination to the Lodge : whereupon Bentley sent word that unless they consented, he would not allow any one of the leases, then ready, to be sealed. This threat was ineffectual at the time ; but having with great difficulty gained over eight of the Fellows, he summoned another meeting, at which, contrary to practice, he was himself present, and thus carried his point by a majority. This transaction has been represented by his adversaries in too heinous a light. In the bargain itself there was nothing dishonourable : it involved no loss to the Society ; nor was it an unreasonable accommodation to the College tenant. The danger of a bad example was urged : but the circumstances of this property were so different from those of other estates, that it could hardly have been adduced as the precedent for an alienation. The purchaser defrayed the mortgage and all expenses, and of the remaining money, about 20*l.*, half was assigned to the widow of the felon, and half to the College library. The real *gravamen* of the transaction was its opposition to the letter of the law, and the violence with which it was forced upon the consent of the body.



following, on the death of Dr. Smith, the Vice-master, Bentley communicated to Colbatch that, notwithstanding some chagrin at his late opposition, he wished to constitute him Vice-master, and commit to his care the principal management of the college. This offer, although repeatedly urged, the other firmly declined, partly because it seemed an attempt to draw him over to the Master's faction, but principally because the statutes order that the Vice-master shall be one of the eight Seniors; and he could not be chosen into the present vacancy, without doing injustice to Dr. Ayloffe, who had a prior claim. On the failure of this proposal, the vice-mastership was kept vacant till the ensuing annual election, when Mr. Modd was chosen, although wanting the statutable qualification of a degree in divinity. It is impossible not to regret that circumstances prevented the appointment of such a man as Colbatch to this situation; it would have afforded the best chance of healing all domestic wounds, and of diverting the Master from a line of conduct, which was as injurious to his own credit and interests as to the welfare of his society.

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Bentley  
offers him  
the Vice-  
mastership.

Dr. Bentley relying upon the pacification effected with many of his prosecutors, now proceeded to carry his measures in the style of an irresponsible autocrat. His plan was to strengthen and perpetuate his power by securing to himself all appointments and patronage whatsoever. A small vicarage, Flintham in Nottinghamshire, unworthy the acceptance of a Fellow, happening to be vacant, and two young men appearing as candidates for it, Mr. Bradshaw and Mr. Fernihough, the former had the votes of the Master and two Seniors, while the latter was supported by six Seniors. In defiance of this vote, he wrote down in the Conclusion-book the name of Bradshaw as vicar;

The  
Master's  
disposal of  
College  
livings.



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Jan. 1715.

and relied on succeeding with the sixteen, whose sanction is necessary for fixing the seal to a presentation. By great exertions he procured the consent of a majority of that body : but at the meeting only ten appeared ; whereupon he joined them, and saying that ‘ the Master’s vote was surely equivalent to that of six Fellows,’ put the seal to the presentation. Another small living, called Over, was given to a Bachelor of Arts, whose ‘ face,’ he declared, ‘ he had never seen,’ but who was believed to have merited this preferment by engaging to marry Mrs. Bentley’s maid. In case of livings taken by Fellows, the statutes, combined with the late interpretation, seemed to define the right of choice so clearly as to preclude any exercise of favouritism. But the Master, by retaining in his own discretion the nomination to College-preacherships, (without which a living could not be held by a Fellow), virtually possessed himself of the power of granting or withholding preferment at his pleasure. He had promised the living of Barrington to Mr. Hacket, a favourer of his views : but it was claimed by Mr. Rud, who, though junior in standing, was superior in degree to the other. This case was embarrassing to the Master, as according to the interpretation which he had been so anxious to maintain, the senior Bachelor of Divinity possessed the prior option. Rud, as well as Hacket, had always sided with his party in the College disputes : but it was objected that he was not *Concionator* ; Rud urged that he had performed all the requisite exercises, and might be immediately elected into one of the vacant preacherships, if the Master pleased ; nay, he offered to incur the risk of forfeiting his fellowship : but the promise had been given to Hacket, and, therefore, a peremptory stop was put to the other’s claims, by



Bentley pronouncing that his not being already a preacher, was *causa gravissima* for his exclusion.

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In the foundation of Trinity College are comprised twenty *pauperes*, called beadsmen, who receive pensions of 6*l.* each, with a livery : these are usually old servants or retainers of the College, whose age and good conduct deserve such a provision. In 1715 the Master proposed to the Seniority to fill up two vacancies with persons recommended to him by a gentleman of the county : one was an alehouse keeper ; the other, Joseph Lindsay, had merited this patronage by being the leader of the Tory mob at the late election. To the first, who was unknown to them, the Fellows made no objection ; but on the mention of the other the whole meeting started with astonishment ; they alleged that he was the most worthless and notorious character in the town, the universal ring-leader in all riots and disturbances. Bentley replied, then by his appointment the College was sure to be protected from rioters ; and added, that it was for their interest to oblige the gentlemen of the county : but when he found that neither his jokes nor his arguments availed, he declared that he would elect this man with the single vote of Mr. Brabourn, an unfortunate personage of impaired intellects, who was now become his never-failing supporter.

The Master, being resolved to keep the whole administration of the College in his own hands, was unwilling that his council should interfere with the accounts of the several officers. At the first audit which he attended, Colbatch observed that they had been a whole day employed in casting up figures, instead of examining the accounts, the proper business of an audit ; adding that if this were to be considered as an approbation of the accounts, he would not so far betray his trust as to countenance the pro-

Dec. 3,  
1714.



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ceedings with his presence. Bentley answered that the time for examination was not yet come. On the following day, he proposed to the Seniors in the Master's absence, that they should examine the accounts and vouchers; to which all assented: but they judged it right to send the Vice-master to inform Bentley of what they were about, that he might have the opportunity of assisting at the work. The Master declared that he wished to look at the account-books himself; which, accordingly, were all sent to him. He kept them for above a fortnight, till the *dies computi* or day on which the whole business is to be wound up, and then carried them to the meeting, and inquired whether there was any objection made to the accounts; Colbatch replied that they had not yet been examined; but was told that 'it was then too late, as that ought to have been done at the audit.'

Further  
measures  
against  
Miller.

July 8,  
1715.

But although Dr. Bentley carried all his points and set opposition at defiance, he could not feel secure so long as his inveterate enemy, Serjeant Miller, continued in the society. Besides, his favourite Ashenhurst, whom he had appointed Lay-fellow on Miller's deprivation in 1710, now stood in a dangerous predicament: that act had been done with the express disapprobation of the whole Board, and was condemned from every other quarter; it followed therefore that the appointment of a successor was invalid: indeed the late proceedings were an admission of Miller being still a Fellow: and at Midsummer 1715, Ashenhurst's fellowship would statutably become void on account of his standing. To obviate this danger, the Master made two attempts in the March preceding to get Miller's name erased: but the Seniors had the discretion to refuse a compliance which would have been both inconsistent and indecent. On the second occasion he offered to refer this point to the arbitration



of the Bishop of Ely ; which, though an ingenious and plausible device, was declined <sup>14</sup>. At length when the appointed day arrived, and no cognizance had been taken of the matter by the Crown, he proposed that the point should be considered as decided against Miller, and in favour of Humphreys. This was too glaringly partial : but the Seniors did assent unanimously to another proposal, that the profits of the fellowship should be reserved until the controversy was decided by the King. The latter point was carried with the consent of Colbatch, whose notions upon statutable questions were of the strictest kind, and who seems to have thought that the ground now taken against Miller was legal and substantial.

But while eager to despatch one adversary, Bentley seems hardly to have observed that he was bringing upon himself another whose character made him much more formidable. At this time he took upon himself almost the whole management of the College revenues ; the bursar, to whose office they belonged, being incapacitated by age and weakness of sight. Indeed, throughout his mastership all important business was transacted immediately by himself, and Colbatch acknowledges that no person better understood matters of that nature. He engaged to grant two leases of considerable estates, in which the provisions of the Corn Act of the 18th of Elizabeth were neglected. This well-known law makes it necessary that in all college leases, one-third of the rent shall be reserved in a certain quantity of corn and malt, or in the market price of those commodities at the half-yearly rent days ; by which means a portion of the revenue is made to keep pace with the real value

College  
leases.

<sup>14</sup> Bentley probably felt secure that Bishop Fleetwood, the author of *Chronicon Pretiosum*, would adjudge Serj. Miller's estate to be a sufficient reason for vacating his fellowship.



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of money. In the first of these leases a clause was found, fixing the price of wheat at twenty pence and of malt at fifteen pence a bushel; in the other the whole rent was reserved in money, without mention of either wheat or malt. The defence of this palpable illegality was, that in former leases of those particular estates the same covenants had been introduced. But whether they had originated in fraud or neglect, the wrong of a hundred years could not justify its repetition, when people's minds were enlightened by experience, respecting the fluctuating value of money; particularly as the immediate tendency of the agreement was to obtain a larger fine to the existing society, by diminishing the just revenue of future times. Colbatch, having in vain urged these and other arguments to prevent the sealing, made a formal protest; declaring that he not only dissented, but reserved to himself the right of appealing against these acts to the Visitor of the College.

Colbatch  
applies to  
the Bishop  
of Ely.

He accordingly applied to the Bishop of Ely, laying before him the subjects of complaint, and praying for his interference: but that prelate declared, as he had done to Serjeant Miller, that he would not act as Visitor of the College, until he was convinced that his see possessed the right which so many of the Crown lawyers had denied to it, or until he received orders from the King to execute that office.

Abp. Wake  
interests  
himself in  
favour of the  
Fellows.

To ascertain the visitatorial power by the interposition of the Crown, seemed now the only practicable step; and all efforts were made to solicit the attention of Government to the state of this Royal foundation. In this cause a powerful advocate was unexpectedly obtained. At the beginning of 1716, Dr. Wake, the Bishop of Lincoln, was advanced to the primacy, which he held for above twenty years



with singular advantage to the Church of England. One of the first subjects which engaged the attention of the new Archbishop, was the condition of Trinity College. It happened that one of the junior Fellows, Philip Farewell, was patronized by his Grace, and admitted to his frequent and intimate conversation: this gentleman maintained a correspondence with Colbatch, and through his means the Primate became acquainted with all the proceedings at Trinity; and gave his decided opinion, that the society could not go on any longer under the arbitrary proceedings of the Master: he recommended a petition to the King in Council, promising to second it himself at the Council-board, and to advise the appointment of a Royal commission to visit the College, and arrange all differences. He suggested likewise a previous application to Lord Townshend, the Premier, to whose department, as Secretary of State, the business belonged. By the agency of Mr. Farewell, both he and Lord Parker, the Chief Justice, an old member of Trinity, were solicited in favour of this scheme. The Minister intimated, through his confidential friend Dr. Cannon, that ‘if a petition were presented, signed by ten or twelve respectable names, it would receive attention.’ Accordingly the following temperate appeal, couched in terms free from hostility or offence, was subscribed by nineteen Fellows of Trinity.

May 18,  
1716.  
They petition the King.

“ TO THE KING’S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

“ *The Humble Petition of many of the Fellows and Members of the College of the Holy and Undivided Trinity, in the Town and University of Cambridge, of King Henry the Eighth’s Foundation.*

“ Sheweth,

“ That by the 46th chapter of the statutes, by which the said College was at first governed, given by your Majesty’s Royal



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predecessor King Edward the Sixth, of blessed memory, the Lord Bishop of Ely, for the time being, was appointed Ordinary Visitor of the same. But in latter statutes, given by your Majesty's Royal predecessor Queen Elizabeth, of like blessed and glorious memory, (by which only the College hath been ever since governed) the said 46th chapter is wholly omitted, and yet, as your petitioners humbly conceive, is plainly referred to in the 40th chapter of these latter statutes, the said Lord Bishop of Ely being there styled the Visitor. All which will appear from copies of both those chapters hereunto annexed. The which omission and reference, by making it uncertain how far the power of the said Lord Bishop doth extend, have occasioned many great inconveniences, through a long disuse of regular visitations, which founders of Colleges have always thought necessary for the maintenance of good discipline; and the want of some person of undoubted authority, to whom the several members of the said College might, upon urgent occasions, apply themselves for the redress of grievances, and a speedy composure of such differences as may arise, and of late years have arisen, among them, concerning their respective rights and privileges; but remain still undetermined, to the great disquiet of the College, the present Lord Bishop of Ely forbearing to interpose his authority till such time as his right to the ordinary visitatorial power shall be declared.

“ Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray, that your Most Excellent Majesty, as Royal Successor to the Founder of the said College, will graciously please to ascertain the visitatorial power, either by a new grant, or confirmation of it to the said Lord Bishop; or else by authorising such persons to execute the same as to your Royal wisdom shall seem meet.

“ And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.”

Few of these petitioners had been concerned in the late prosecution at Ely House. It was the advice of the Archbishop, which coincided with Colbatch's own wishes, to keep this cause separate from that of Miller. But the Serjeant, by importunity, prevailed upon the petitioners to intrust to him the care of presenting their prayer to the Council. This had the effect which was apprehended, of identifying their case with his own grievances, and seems to have been the reason of its continuing several months unnoticed.



It was remarked by Dr. Bentley's adversaries, that, whenever he was placed in peril for mal-administration of his College, his practice was to come forward with some literary production which might interest the public in favour of its author, and that therefore a share of the merits of his works was due to his prosecutors. A comparison of dates does certainly tend to establish in many instances the truth of this observation. On the 15th of April, when he probably knew that a petition to the King was in agitation, he first announced his great plan of publishing a Greek Testament, the text of which should be restored with certainty by a method yet unattempted. He had, however, for some time meditated this undertaking. John James Wetstein, who himself became many years afterwards an editor of the Greek Testament, claims the merit of having first suggested the scheme. Being in England at the beginning of this year, he was kindly received by the Doctor, first in Trinity College, and afterwards at the King's Library; happening to mention, that he had made collations of some manuscripts of the New Testament in France, Bentley pressed for their immediate publication; when, in the course of conversation, Wetstein expressed a wish that the Doctor would himself undertake an edition of the New Testament, offering him as an assistance the use of all his collations. This however was not, as he supposed, the first recommendation of the kind; our readers are aware that a similar suggestion had been publicly made three years before by his friend Dr. Hare.

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Bentley's  
scheme of  
publishing  
the Greek  
Testament.

Having resolved to devote himself to this work, the most important that can employ a scholar and divine, he propounded his plan in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in which his views are



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detailed fully and with great clearness. A few extracts will put the reader at once into possession of the object, scope, and pretensions of the projected edition.

“ May it please your Grace,

“ ’Tis not only your Grace’s station and general character, but the particular knowledge I have of you, which encourages me to give you a long letter about those unfashionable topics religion and learning. Your Grace knows, as well as any, what an alarm has been made of late years with the vast heap of various lections found in MSS. of the Greek Testament. The Papists have made a great use of them against the Protestants, and the Atheists against them both. This was one of Collins’ topics in his Discourse on Free-thinking, which I took off in my short answer; and I have heard since from several hands, that the short view I gave of the causes, and necessity, and use of various lections, made several good men more easy in that matter than they were before. But since that time, I have fallen into a course of studies that led me to peruse many of the oldest MSS. of Gr. Test. and of the Latin too of St. Jerom, of which there are several in England, a full 1000 years old. The result of which has been that I find I am able (what some thought impossible) to give an edition of the Gr. Test. exactly as it was in the best exemplars at the time of the Council of Nice. So that there shall not be twenty words nor even particles difference; and this shall carry its own demonstration in every verse, which I affirm cannot be so done of any other ancient book, Greek or Latin. So that book which, by the present management, is thought the most uncertain, shall have a testimony of certainty above all other books whatever, and an end be put at once to all Var. Lectt. now or hereafter. I’ll give your Grace the progress which brought me by degrees into the present view and scheme that I have of a new edition.

“ Upon some points of curiosity, I collated one or two of St. Paul’s Epistles with the Alexandrian MS. the oldest and best now in the world; I was surprised to find several transpositions of words, that Mills and the other collators took no notice of; but I soon found their way was to mark nothing but change of words; the collocation and order they entirely neglected; and yet at sight I discerned what a new force and beauty this new order (I found in the MS.) added to the sentence. This encouraged me to collate the whole book over, to a letter, with my own hands.”

\* \* \* \* \*



“ The Western Latin copies, by variety of translations, without public appointment, and a jumble and heap of all of them, were grown so uncertain, that scarce two copies were alike; which obliged Damasus, then Bishop of Rome, to employ St. Jerom to regulate the best received translation of each part of the New Testament to the original Greek; and so set out a new edition so castigated and corrected. This he declares in his preface he did, *ad Græcam veritatem, ad exemplaria Græca, sed vetera*; and his learning, great name, and just authority, extinguished all the other Latin versions, and has been conveyed down to us, under the name of the Vulgate. ’Twas plain to me that when that copy came first from that great Father’s hands, it must agree exactly with the most authentic Greek exemplars, and if now it could be retrieved, it would be the best test and voucher for the true reading out of several pretending ones. But when I came to try Pope Clement’s Vulgate, I soon found the Greek of the Alexandrian and that would by no means pary. This set me to examine the Pope’s Latin by some MS. of 1000 years old, and the success is, that the old Greek copies and the old Latin so exactly agree (when an able hand discerns the rasures and the old lections lying under them), that the pleasure and satisfaction it gives me is beyond expression.

“ The New Testament has been under a hard fate since the invention of printing. After the Complutenses and Erasmus, who had but very ordinary MSS. it has become the property of book-sellers. Rob. Stephens’ edition, set out and regulated by himself alone, is now become the standard. The text stands, as if an Apostle was his compositor.”

\* \* \* \* \*

“ I am already tedious, and the post is a going. So that to conclude—in a word, I find that by taking 2000 errors out of the Pope’s Vulgate, and as many out of the Protestant Pope Stephens’, I can set out an edition of each in columns, without using any book under 900 years old, that shall so exactly agree word for word, and, what at first amazed me, order for order, that no two tallies, nor two indentures can agree better. I affirm that these so placed will prove each other to a demonstration; for I alter not a letter of my own head without the authority of these old witnesses. And the beauty of the composition (barbarous, God knows, at present), is so improved, as makes it more worthy of a revelation, and yet no one text of consequence injured or weakened.

“ My Lord, if a casual fire should take either his Majesty’s library or the King’s of France’s, all the world could not do this. As I have therefore great impulse, and I hope not *ἀθεεῖ*, to set about this work immediately, and leave it as a *κειμήλιον* to posterity,



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against Atheists and Infidels; I thought it my duty and my honour to first acquaint your Grace with it; and know if the extrinsic expense to do such a work completely (for my labour I reckon nothing) may obtain any encouragement, either from the Crown or public.

“ I am, with all duty and obedience,

“ Your Grace’s most humble servant,

“ RI. BENTLEY.”

“ *Trin. Coll. April the 15th, 1716.*”

In addressing to Archbishop Wake his application for public aid in the accomplishment of so great a work, he was justified not only by the station of that prelate, but by the encouragement with which he always promoted the cause of religion and learning. The Archbishop had indeed been himself addicted to similar pursuits, and when residing at Paris, in the reign of Charles II. had made collations of manuscripts for Dr. Mill’s edition. I regret that his reply is not found among Bentley’s papers; it appears from the following letter to have been highly encouraging.

“ May it please your Grace,

“ This minute I had the honour of your Grace’s letter; indeed when I saw by the prints that your Grace was in full Convocation, and had addressed his Majesty upon so just an occasion<sup>15</sup>, and consequently was immersed in business of the highest importance; I condemned myself, that I should be so immersed here in books and privacy, as not to know a more proper occasion of address to your Grace. On a due consideration of all which, I gave over expecting any answer, and designed to wait on you in person, when I came to London, where already my family is. But I see your Grace’s goodness and public spirit is superior to all fatigues; and therefore I thank you particularly for this present favour; as what was (justly) above my expectation. The thought of printing the Latin in a column against the Greek (which your Grace puts to the common) I doubt not is your own. My Lord, it is necessary to do so: and without that, all my scheme would be nothing. It was the very view that possessed me with this thought which has now so

<sup>15</sup> Congratulations to the King on the suppression of the Rebellion.



engaged me, and in a manner enslaved me, that *væ mihi*, unless I do it. Nothing but sickness (by the blessing of God) shall hinder me from prosecuting it to the end. I leave the rest to the time of the Westminster election: with my hearty prayers and thanks, being

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“ Your Grace’s most obedient and obliged humble servant,  
“ R<sup>I</sup>. BENTLEY.”

A few weeks afterwards Trinity College and the University sustained the severest misfortune by the death of Professor Cotes, who fell a victim to a violent fever in the flower of his age and reputation. This loss to science and to the world was so great as to draw from Sir Isaac Newton the well-known observation, “ Had he lived, we should have known something.” To the Master the blow was peculiarly severe: Cotes had lived in daily intimacy with him for at least ten years, was attached to him and his interests, and conferred credit and respectability upon his party. His disposition and manners were amiable and endearing, and he is never mentioned by his contemporaries but in terms of regard. He was interred in the chapel of Trinity College, where his premature loss continues to this day to be spoken of with the kind of regret excited by a calamity of recent occurrence. The inscription on his monument was written by the Master, and is universally admired for the beauty of its language: we may add, it appears from all concurring accounts of the man, that this eulogy was neither undeserved nor extravagant<sup>16</sup>.

Death of  
Cotes.  
June 5.

Cotes was succeeded in the Plumian professorship by his relation Robert Smith, who had been his assistant in the observatory, and became the editor of his posthumous works. He was at this time a junior Fellow of Trinity: in the course of years he succeeded Bentley in the mastership of the College, over which he continued to preside within the memory of the

Rob. Smith.



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living generation. It is sufficiently known how greatly the philosophical pursuits and reputation of Cambridge are indebted to his works as well as to his patronage ; but it is not immaterial to observe, that throughout the life of Dr. Bentley Smith continued to be his decided partizan, and appears subsequently to have taken all opportunities of testifying respect for his memory.

History and  
death of  
Kuster.

Not long afterwards Bentley lost another of his attached and devoted friends, by the melancholy death of Kuster. The whole career of this distinguished scholar has in it some singularity, arising from a peculiar temper, rather than from unusual circumstances. The reader will recollect, that at the time of the publication of his *Aristophanes*, his grand object was to purchase a life annuity, as a small but secure independence. Having accomplished this

<sup>16</sup> H. S. E.

ROGERUS ROBERTI FILIUS COTES,  
Hujus Collegii S. Trinitatis Socius,  
Et Astronomiæ et Experimentalis  
Philosophiæ Professor Plumianus ;

Qui immatura morte præreptus,  
Pauca quidem ingenii sui

Pignora reliquit,

Sed egregia, sed admiranda,  
Ex intimis Matheseos penetralibus  
Felici solertia tum primum eruta ;  
Post magnum illum Newtonum,  
Societatis hujus spes altera,

Et decus gemellum ;

Cui ad summam doctrinæ laudem  
Omnes morum virtutumque dotes  
In cumulum accesserunt ;

Eo magis spectabiles amabilesque,  
Quod in formoso corpore

Gratiores venirent.

Natus Burbagii

In Agro Leicestriensi,

Jul. x. MDCLXXXII.

Obiit Jun. v. MDCCXVI.



point, he published in Holland his well known reprint of Mill's New Testament, two or three tracts in a controversy with Gronovius, (who continued to abuse the Suidas as long as he lived), and several small productions; when, by the failure of his banker, he was suddenly cast down from the independence which he had all his life been labouring to attain. Upon this calamity he came over to England, for the double purpose of engaging with booksellers for the publication of Hesychius, and obtaining a pecuniary loan from his friends. This was in the summer of 1712; when, though flattered with hopes of assistance by Bishop Moore and others, he returned without any real aid, except what he received from Dr. Bentley, who lent him a considerable sum with but slender chance of its repayment. In a short time he received a tempting proposal from the Abbé Bignon, librarian to the King of France: he was invited to reside at Paris, with a pension of 2000 livres, a further appointment as member of the *Academie des Inscriptions*, and all the consideration which his learning was sure to command among the French *Savans*. The condition imposed on him was a change of religion. Whether or not the sacrifice cost him much pain, we do not learn; but at least he took a decorous time to listen to the reasonings of certain Jesuits, to whom he applied for the satisfaction of his conscience. In 1713 he went to Paris, declared himself a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, and immediately experienced the liberality and countenance of Louis XIV. After some time he informed Dr. Bentley of his change of religion, and the comforts and honours of his new situation. The Doctor's reply seems to have been full of kindness and unabated friendship. Their correspondence continued through the year 1714: some parts of Kuster's letters are very interesting, par-

Kuster goes to Paris and becomes a Roman Catholic.



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His project-  
ed Hesychius.

ticularly the account of his successful combat at a meeting of the Academy, in defence of Bentley and one of his emendations of Horace, *Si potes ARCHIACIS conviva recumbere lectis* for *Archaicis*. It may be noticed, that Bentley's merits did not meet with the same acknowledgment in France as in the other countries of Europe ; partly from aversion to strict criticism, and partly from offence at the manner in which he had spoken, in his Horace, of Dacier and other French scholars. In another letter he describes the beauties and attractions of the country villa of his patron the Abbé Bignon ; being anxious to tempt Bentley across the sea, and make him acquainted with his Parisian friends. About this time his well-known treatise on the Greek Middle Verb made its appearance ; and it is to be regretted that we do not possess the sentiments of Bentley upon his theory. Kuster now devoted himself to his great work, the Hesychius, which was to be printed at Paris, and the sheets sent to Bentley as they left the press, that he might draw up his corrections and observations of matters unnoticed by the editor, in readiness to be given as an Appendix. But his application to study was too intense for his constitution, and brought on an extraordinary complaint, which put a sudden termination to his life ; and with him was lost the prospect of Bentley's emendations being given to the world<sup>17</sup>.

Kuster's fate added one to the number of abortive editions of Hesychius. About half the work had

<sup>17</sup> It was reported and believed at the time, though without foundation, that Kuster died by suicide. A letter of his friend Wasse gives the following account of his death : " We heard soon after that he had been blooded five or six times for a fever, and that upon opening his body there was found a cake of sand along the lower region of his belly. This, I take it, was occasioned by his sitting nearly double, and writing on a very low table, surrounded with three or four circles of books placed on the ground, which was the situation we usually found him in."



been prepared and written out for the press : after his death two members of the *Academie*, Sevin and Sallier, undertook to complete it ; but after labouring for several years, they discovered that it was too much for them, and abandoned the task : and in 1736 they handsomely transmitted Kuster's manuscript to Alberti, who availed himself of it in his splendid edition, of which it forms one of the most important ingredients<sup>18</sup>. The truth is, that long intercourse with Bentley had put him into possession of his friend's notions upon this valuable but faulty Lexicon, the peculiarities of which he is allowed to have understood better than any other scholar. A specimen of our critic's insight into Hesychius was called forth by a correspondence with John Christian Biel, a divine of Brunswick, best known by his posthumous work, the *Thesaurus of the Old Testament*. He was then preparing for publication a collection of all the scriptural glosses found in Hesychius ; but having some time before travelled in England, where he visited the Universities, and was received by our Aristarchus with the kindness which he never failed to extend to scholars, he remembered to have learned from him, that those explanations of scriptural expressions were not Hesychius's, but interpolated in his Lexicon by some later hand. He therefore wrote to inquire the grounds of such an opinion, and received from Bentley, in reply, a very full and clear demonstration of this phenomenon. Bentley's letter, which is not only learned but amusing, was communicated by Biel to

Bentley's  
correspondence with  
Biel.

<sup>18</sup> Kuster left a common-place book, containing his unprinted notes and emendations on the remainder of the Lexicon, upon which volume, although deposited in the *Bibliothèque du Roi*, Sevin and Sallier had not the good fortune to lay their hands; otherwise they would probably have completed the publication: it was, however, discovered time enough to be used in the second volume of Hesychius. See Ruhnken's Preface to Vol. II. of Alberti's Hesychius.



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Alberti, and is printed among the *Prolegomena* of the latter's edition: the two letters of Biel, in which he makes his request, and expresses his acknowledgments, are well-written, replete with literary information, and deserve to be printed along with that of his illustrious correspondent.

Project for  
Bentley's  
publishing  
classical  
books for  
the use of  
Prince Frederick.

Bentley's mind was at this period occupied by a number of heterogeneous objects, each of which he pursued with spirit and energy. His hours of study were devoted to preparations for the edition of the New Testament, designed to be the mighty work which should immortalize his name. At the same time he meditated a widely different undertaking, an edition of Classical Authors *in usum Principis Frederici*. Prince Frederic, the heir to the throne, being now about eleven years old, his education became an object of national importance; and it was generally expected and wished that he should immediately be brought over to England. A suggestion was said to have been made by the two Chief Justices, Parker and King<sup>19</sup>, that editions of the classics should be printed for the use of the young Prince; and in order to eclipse the French performances *in usum Delphini*, they recommended that the editor should be Dr. Bentley. Lord Townshend approved the idea, and a negotiation for this purpose was opened through the intervention of Bentley's friend, Dr. Hare, who lived on terms of great intimacy with the Minister. Our

<sup>19</sup> Dr. White Kennett, the Dean of Peterborough, in a letter of Sept. 29, 1716, preserved in the Bodleian library, having just visited Cambridge, says:

"I had it from the best authority, that the Master of Trinity was recommended by the two Lord Chief Justices to undertake a new beautiful edition of the Classics, *In Usum Frederici Principis*, and that he had dined twice with Lord Townshend on that occasion, that he was offered 500*l.* a year for that service; but he insisted on a pension of 1000*l.* for life; which, I presume, however, will not be granted till the King's return."



critic was led to expect, as a remuneration, a pension of 1000*l.* a year: but some misunderstanding took place about the terms of his engagement. One report states that Lord Townshend only undertook for 500*l.* But according to the account of Dr. Salter, who heard it from Bentley's own mouth, an alteration was made in the proposal, with the object of tying him down to the performance rather by his interest than his honour; and he was offered a fixed sum for every sheet that he should publish. This communication being brought to him by Hare, he rejected it, not without indignation: against his friend, whom he always suspected to be the author of the suggestion, he felt much resentment; and their intimacy abated from this time<sup>20</sup>. It is clear however that the negotiation was not finally broken off in consequence of the dispute, whatever it might have been, respecting terms: for I find those differences mentioned in September, and on November the 18th Bentley himself, in a letter to Dr. Clarke, speaks of the scheme as being still on the tapis, and waiting for his Majesty's return. There is, I think, little doubt that the failure of the plan was really owing to the Minister himself

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Proposed  
pension.

<sup>20</sup> This account is given by Mr. John Nichols, in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1779, vol. xlix. p. 547, in Dr. Salter's own words. In the anecdotes of Bentley given by Dr. Salter, both there and in Bowyer's edition of the work on Phalaris, some inaccuracies are to be observed. He wrote them in his old age, apparently from the memory of conversations with Bentley about 40 years before. On this occasion, he says: "Hare went between Lord T. and Dr. B. and matters were just concluded; when an envious and malignant suggestion of H.'s (as Dr. B. suspected and was persuaded) defeated the whole; and B. magnanimously disclaimed to engage with persons who discovered so illiberal a distrust of him. Instead of an annual sum and a publication *suo arbitrio*, it was now proposed by Lord T. through Dr. H. that B. should have so much *per* sheet. B. rejected the offer with scorn. 'I wonder,' said he to H., 'you should bring me such a proposal, who have known me so long. What, if I had no regard to their honour and to my own, would there be any difficulty in filling sheets? Tell them I will have nothing to do with it.' "



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Schism  
among the  
ministers.

being driven from the helm. The King passed several months of this year in his German dominions; and it was not thought right to embark in any measure which concerned the rising branch of the Royal Family, without the cognizance and approbation of his Majesty. But at this moment a schism was taking place in the Whig administration, who having obtained complete possession of the government, now began to squabble for the spoils. The Earl of Sunderland, so much distinguished for his overbearing conduct while a minister of Queen Anne, followed the King to Hanover, and contrived, with the assistance of Stanhope, the other Secretary of State, to prejudice the Royal mind against Townshend so effectually, that in December he procured his dismissal, and obtained for himself the principal station in the ministry. After a short struggle, Walpole and all Townshend's party resigned, and left Sunderland in full enjoyment of the object of his intrigues. After this change, we hear no more of the proposal for a new edition of the Classics.

Bentley's  
violent  
measures  
against  
Miller.  
Sept. 28.

In the mean time Bentley's name continued to excite public attention on several different accounts. Relying, as it appears, upon the powerful interest with which he had fortified himself, he resolved to put down by vigorous measures the remaining opposition in his college. On the day fixed for the election of Fellows, Mr. Serjeant Miller came to Cambridge determined to take his station among the eight Seniors, and there to maintain his own cause against the Master. The latter was resolved at all hazards to exclude him; and for this purpose had recourse to strange and unheard-of expedients. First, he stated to the candidates for fellowships, his determination that if Mr. Miller intruded himself into the meeting, there should be no election; and advised them to



dissuade him from a purpose so injurious to themselves. He next sent for Zachary Pearce, one of the aspirants, and suggested, that he being a Westminster scholar might bring a body of students educated at that school, among whom a great *esprit de corps* existed, to block out the Serjeant by manual force<sup>21</sup>. Finding these notable schemes ineffectual, the Master resolved to rid himself of his enemy by the means he would have used against a thief or a house-breaker. He summoned the meeting to his own lodge, and prepared two constables for Miller's reception; who, when he entered with the others, laid hands upon him and insisted on his quitting the house. The Serjeant gave way to this violence; and Colbatch, disgusted with the scene, left the lodge, declaring against the force which was introduced. The Master and Seven Fellows who remained, immediately subscribed a decree, that neither Miller nor Humphreys should be allowed to act as a Fellow, before the controversy respecting their claims had been decided. They then proceeded, attended by the constables, to the chapel, the statutable place of election, where Colbatch joined them, and protested against the validity of any measures decreed in his absence.

At the election of officers, three days afterwards, another storm took place: Dr. Colbatch being now one of the eight Seniors, felt it his duty to claim the post of Vice-master, which had been held for two years past by Mr. Modd, a feeble old man, destitute of the requisite qualifications. The statutes require that this officer shall always be a graduate in Divinity, never of an inferior degree, *si commodè fieri potest*. Upon the master proposing his re-election, Colbatch desired that the statute might be read;

Election of  
officers.

<sup>21</sup> This last story would be incredible, were it not taken from a manuscript statement which gives it on the authority of Pearce himself.



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pointing out that Modd was neither Doctor nor Bachelor of Divinity, while he himself was both. Bentley immediately replied by quoting the clause *si commode fieri potest*, and telling him that his conduct during the last week would make his appointment not only *incommodum*, but *incommodissimum*. An altercation ensued, in which he abused Colbatch with violence and scurrility disgraceful to his own station and character. This ebullition of wrath probably arose not so much from any thing that had occurred in College, as from a discovery of Colbatch's persevering endeavours to obtain the notice of Government to the Petition of the Fellows. From that day there ceased to be any intercourse of a friendly or civil nature between these two Doctors; they regarded each other as implacable and mortal foes, and this dreadful feeling ended only with their lives.

Fellowship  
election.

It is necessary to advert to the fellowship-election of this year, which, from one of the candidates becoming his own biographer, has obtained a memorial in literary annals. Dr. Bentley availed himself of his present influence over the majority of his council, to convert all elections, both of Fellows and Scholars, into nominations of his own. However, in exercising his choice, he prided himself upon introducing into the society the ablest and most meritorious young men; and his enemies have been able to establish but few instances of his deviation from this rule in the space of forty years: but he regarded not whether he had ascertained their merit by examination at the time, or by a knowledge of their previous performances in College, or even by the reports of others. In short, the Master felt himself at liberty to use the same discretionary power as that exerted by the Dean of Christchurch in nominating to the studentships at his disposal. But the circumstances of the



cases were totally different; what was lawful in one College, was in positive contradiction to the statutes of the other. In consequence he was frequently solicited, particularly by the great and powerful, in favour of candidates for fellowships; a species of application which a constitutional master would deem an affront, but which Bentley appears to have encouraged. In 1715, he chose, after little or no examination, a candidate who brought him a letter of recommendation from Bishop Atterbury, to whom he was secretary. At the election of which we are now speaking, three excellent scholars were chosen; Leonard Thompson, Zachary Pearce, and John Walker: the two last of whom will be repeatedly noticed in these memoirs. Pearce had given some kind of offence to the Master, or rather to his minister Ashenhurst, and it was expected that he would have been rejected. But being patronised by Lord Parker, the Chief Justice, to whom he had just dedicated his well-known edition of *Cicero de Oratore*, he obtained from him a letter of recommendation to Bentley, who thereupon elected him Fellow, saying at the same time, ‘My Lord has made me your friend, let him make you mine.’ We may easily discern that the Master’s object was to make a show of obliging a powerful individual. But it is impossible to hear such anecdotes without acknowledging the advantage derived to the College and the public, by the present impartial mode of conducting the elections; where the full object of the foundation is ensured by giving the preference to superiority of merit; and where the electors, after a rigid scrutiny into the learning and ability of the candidates, give their votes with an impression that they are performing one of the most solemn and responsible acts of their lives.

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Zachary  
Pearce.



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There were six other candidates, no one of whom was deserving of a fellowship: and there were five vacancies to be supplied. This necessity of choosing unfit persons arose from confining the elections to Bachelors of the senior year; a bad custom which, it is fair to observe, did not originate with Dr. Bentley. Reduced to this predicament, the Master had not the power of committing any material injustice; however, he drew upon himself much obloquy by the two objects of his choice, who were a nephew of Mrs. Bentley, and a nephew of Mr. Hacket, the Fellow already mentioned, whose support it seems to have been sometimes necessary to secure by a bribe<sup>22</sup>.

No sooner were these proceedings reported in London, than considerable sensation was excited, and the affairs of Trinity College became again a subject of general conversation. Serjeant Miller beset the Ministers with renewed complaints, while the petitioning Fellows, through the zealous agency of Mr. Farewell, seized this opportunity for soliciting an attention to their prayer. Archbishop Wake, (who had himself some cause of complaint against Bentley for the uncivil reception which he had given to a mandate sent to the college from Lambeth) expressed his condemnation of the late proceedings in terms as strong as possible; declaring the Master to be 'the greatest instance of human frailty that he knew of, as with such good parts and so much learning he could be so insupportable.' He renewed his promise of zealously seconding the Petition. But it was pretty clear that nothing effectual could be done without the concurrence of Lord Townshend; and that minister had more than one reason for taking no

<sup>22</sup> On this occasion it was commonly observed in College that 'there were elected three scholars, and two nephews.'—*Rud's Diary*.



step in opposition to Dr. Bentley's wishes. However, perseverance in solicitation obtained what it would have been a manifest denial of justice to refuse, the hearing of the Petition to the Crown. It was called for and read in Council, in the presence of the Prince Regent, and was sent by his Royal Highness's commands to Sir Edward Northey, the Attorney General, whose opinion was required upon the legal merits of the case, as well as upon the means of appointing a visitation of Trinity College. The business having proceeded thus far, there were two causes which prevented its coming to any definite result. Sir Edward Northey, though a lawyer of great fame, did not possess the gift of despatch; and Bishop Fleetwood was determined to avoid by every possible method the office of judge in a case which had proved so difficult and irksome to his predecessor. The Attorney General, in execution of his commission, applied both to the Bishop and the Master for their sentiments respecting the visitatorial power: the latter replied at once that he acknowledged the King alone as Visitor of the College; the former deliberated a long time before he returned any reply. After the matter had been six or seven months in the Attorney's hands, one of the petitioning Fellows waiting upon him, was informed that the delay was owing to his not having heard from the Bishop. At length that prelate sent an answer, declaring that he did not insist upon or claim any visitatorial power over Trinity College, because the legal advisers of the late Queen had determined that it belonged not to him but to the Crown; and expressed his readiness to make a surrender of any supposed jurisdiction, if thereby he could contribute to the prosperity of the College.

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XII.  
1716.

The Fellows' Petition read in Council.  
Oct. 26.

Sir Edward Northey.

The affair now seemed to admit of an easy ar-



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rangement ; but either from design or procrastination, Sir Edward Northey still neglected to make his report to the Secretary of State. In a few months he was himself displaced from his office, having given no opinion on the case ; and as if to defeat the object of the Fellows, he retained in his possession the original document, which had been submitted for his examination.

Bentley  
proposes to  
Miller a  
compro-  
mise.

Dr. Bentley, finding the Petition seriously agitated at the Council Board, bethought himself of an expedient for taking off Miller, the enemy whom he most dreaded, by a compromise ; and sounded him with proposals, that he should receive the full emoluments of his fellowship to July 1715, and that his charges, incurred in the suit before Bishop Moore, should be repaid from the common stock of the College. At the same time he circulated among the Fellows this scheme of accommodation, with the addition that his own expenses, as well as those of the prosecuting party, should be defrayed by the College. The Serjeant, however, was not at that time in a humour to listen to any overtures ; he was incensed at all that had passed, and thirsted for revenge against the Doctor, by whose address and management he had hitherto been baffled.

Miller's ac-  
count of the  
University  
of Cam-  
bridge.

But it was the singular good fortune of Bentley that this adversary just then lost the power of giving him further disturbance, by the very method for which an enemy would have prayed—that of ‘ writing a book.’ Among other measures prepared by Lord Townshend’s administration to be introduced into Parliament in the session of 1717, was one asserting the power of the King over the Church, and another regulating the two Universities. Serjeant Miller, whose Whig principles were so violent that he would not even tolerate a High-churchman,



and whose acquaintance with academical matters had qualified him to speak upon such subjects, put forth a little book, entitled ‘ An Account of the University of Cambridge, and the Colleges there,’ addressed to the members of Parliament, and designed to be their guide in the projected reformation. This publication had two objects ; first, to point out methods by which the High-church party might be crushed, and the University made useful to the purposes of the Whig ministry ; and secondly, to direct the public indignation against his enemy Dr. Bentley. By reviewing in detail the statutes both of the University and of his College, he labours to establish this position, that they were all either neglected or imperfectly observed, and that the change of times and circumstances had made an attention to them inconvenient or impracticable. From such premises he drew his conclusion, that they ought to undergo a general repeal, and that other ordinances should be enacted more consonant with the spirit of the age, and the views of his own party. The Serjeant’s zeal so far outran his prudence, that his case, even in matters of fact, was palpably overstated ; and he omitted to observe, that in practice, where the statutes could not be literally fulfilled, their spirit was generally attended to. But the intolerant and even tyrannical measures, which he recommended to answer the purposes of a faction, must have prejudiced candid minds of every party against such a reformer. A considerable portion of the book is devoted to Trinity College, and to such an attack upon the Master and his adherents as might be expected from Miller’s exasperated feelings.

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This performance of the Serjeant came forth immediately after the meeting of Parliament. But the intended measures of reform, whatever they might

Feb.  
1716-17.  
It is generally condemned.



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1716.

Miller cen-  
sured.

have been, were not brought forward, owing to the schism among the Whig leaders, and the struggle for power between the two parties in the cabinet. Among all friends of the Church and Universities the book excited the utmost indignation: Colbatch and the petitioning Fellows of Trinity felt how injurious it was to their cause to be associated with a person whose views were so hostile to the Establishment; and from that moment studiously renounced all confederacy and connexion with him. Miller being Deputy High Steward, the Heads of Colleges applied to the Earl of Manchester, the High Steward, to eject him from that office: the Earl complied with the request, and the Senate ratified his act in a grace which styled the Serjeant's publication *Libellum quendam famosum, contra honorem et privilegia Academicæ scriptum*.

Humble and  
Serious Re-  
presenta-  
tion.

Two months previous to this exposure, the affairs of Trinity College had been brought before the public by another author, who succeeded in keeping his name concealed: his pamphlet, which he styles 'An Humble and Serious Representation of the Present State of Trinity College in Cambridge,' urges against the Master a complaint of rapacity and oppression. The tone is strong, though not passionate; the topics, those with which the reader is already acquainted: Bentley is accused of neglecting the revenues and discipline of the place, of tergiversation in politics, and of indecorum and violence in ejecting Miller by means of constables. The writer, who professes himself a Whig, and has an intimate knowledge of the transactions, laments the apparent disposition of Government to screen the Doctor from a visitation.

Bentley, convinced that this attack proceeded from some one of his Fellows, resolved to meet it with a



prompt and decisive step : on the day after the book was received at Cambridge, he summoned a College-meeting, read some passages, and drew up an order, declaring the work to be ‘ a false and malicious libel upon the good government and flourishing state of the College,’ and denouncing the utmost statutable punishment against any member of the society who should be convicted as the author. Colbatch happening to be absent, the Master obtained the signatures of all the eight resident Seniors to this decree, which he immediately inserted in the newspapers, as a sufficient reply to the ‘ Humble and Serious Representation’<sup>23</sup>.

Among the occurrences in this busy year of his life, we find Dr. Bentley distinguishing himself in the field of politics, as an active partizan of the Government. Upon the suppression of the Rebellion an address of congratulation to the King was proposed to the Senate at Cambridge : this was the production of the Master of Trinity, with whom Waterland, the Vice-chancellor, acted, during his year of office, in strict confederacy. By the constitution of the University, no measure can be brought before the two Houses of Congregation until it has been approved by a committee termed the *Caput*, consisting of the Vice-chancellor and five other

Bentley  
proposes to  
the Senate  
an address  
to the  
throne.

<sup>23</sup> December the 14th, 1716.

“ Whereas a pamphlet, lately printed at London, with the title of *An Humble and Serious Representation of the Present State of Trinity College in Cambridge*, was laid before us, and several passages were read out of it; resolved by the Master and Seniors, that the said pamphlet is a false malicious libel, traducing and misrepresenting the good government and flourishing state of the College ; and that if any member of this Society be duly convicted to be the author of it, he shall be proceeded against with the utmost severity of the statutes.”

RICH. BENTLEY.  
GEORGE MODD.  
EDW. BATHURST.  
ABR. JORDAN.  
MATT. BARWELL.

WM. AYLOFFE.  
JA. BRABOURN.  
JOHN HACKET.  
JOHN BAKER.



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It is reject-  
ed.

persons, each of whom possesses a negative voice. When the grace for sealing and presenting the address was brought before this body, two of them, Dr. Tyson and Mr. King, put their *veto* upon it. Whether these gentlemen acted from Jacobite feelings, or, as they alleged, from dislike of particular expressions in the proposed address, cannot be ascertained: but the effect was, to spread an opinion of the disaffection of the University among all who were unacquainted with the peculiarity of its constitution. Dr. Bentley, in the course of his conversations with Lord Townshend, explained the true state of the case, vindicated the body from the imputation of disloyalty, and took upon himself to promise the Premier that an address on the suppression of the Rebellion should yet be presented by the University. This undertaking was sufficiently bold: during the continuance of that year's Caput, it was evidently impracticable; and the prevailing party held, that due expressions of loyalty might with propriety be postponed till the return of his Majesty from his long visit to Hanover; and that the expense of two addresses was a needless call upon the academical finances. But Bentley having pledged himself for the result, took private measures to influence the appointment of a Caput for the ensuing year. This body, which is considered to represent the interests of the whole Senate, consists of a Doctor in each of the three faculties of Divinity, Law, and Physic, and a member of each of the two Houses of Congregation. They are chosen annually, on the 12th of October, by the Heads of Colleges, the Doctors, the Proctors, and the Scrutators: but their appointment, being considered as a matter of routine, commonly excites little attention. His aim was to procure the return of himself and his two friends Doctors Brookbank and Ashenhurst, to represent the

Bentley's  
manœuvres.



three faculties. This scheme, could it have been kept secret, would probably have succeeded; but it took wind, and business was resumed after the long-vacation with a resolution to oppose the intrigues of Dr. Bentley. This displayed itself on the first day of term, when Mr. Witton, a junior Fellow of Trinity, and particular favourite of the Master, being nominated as one of the Pro-proctors, a sudden and unusual opposition was started in the Regents' House, where he was rejected by the votes of twenty-five against five: and the majority, to mark more strongly their adverse feeling towards Bentley, immediately chose Mr. Farewell, the person who had distinguished himself by his exertions to procure a hearing for the College Petition. At the election of the Caput he was again defeated in all his nominations; and much triumph was felt at the overthrow of his schemes: but his adversaries were not yet aware of the extent of the resources with which they had to contend. A Congregation being held on the 16th of October, when all was security, and no business of moment expected, only one member of the Caput besides the Vice-chancellor happened to be present. The Master of Trinity now brought forward his Address, which, being publicly read by the Vice-chancellor, the Caput was summoned for its consideration. The statutes enact that in the absence of any member of this body, the senior person present in the same faculty acts as his substitute. So well were Bentley's measures laid, that he himself became representative of the theological faculty, while two other places were supplied by Dr. Ashenhurst and Mr. Laurence Eusden, a junior Fellow of Trinity, much patronized by the Master, who ere long obtained the post of Poet Laureate<sup>24</sup>. This committee having ap-

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1716.

October 10.

October 12.

Address  
again pro-  
posed, and  
carried.

<sup>24</sup> Eusden, who seems to have been an élève of the Master, addressed to him a copy of panegyrical verses on the opening of Trinity Chapel,



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proved of a grace for sealing and presenting the Address, it was regularly put to the vote in the afternoon. The surprise was complete, and the result surpassed even the hopes of the contriver. The Address was of course supported by all the Whig party; several of the Tories joined them, to avoid the suspicion of disloyalty to King George; while others of that party kept aloof, disliking the *coup-de-main*, and regarding the measure as a device to serve the interests of Bentley and Waterland. Thus the question was carried in the Non Regents' House by 36 against 15; and in the Regents' by 34 against 14: and the opposition, not mustering more than 29, afforded Bentley a greater triumph than if they had suffered it to pass in silence.

Address  
presented at  
Court.

The Vice-chancellor and Master of Trinity immediately posted to Town, and, attended by a numerous body of the University, presented the Address at the Prince of Wales's court. The composition is remarkable for its strength and clearness, and is an historical document of some interest. This affair excited much sensation in the public mind: the undivided credit of the achievement was given, both by his friends and foes, to Dr. Bentley; who had now completely acquitted himself of his promise to the Minister, and was regarded in the great world as a person of influence and importance. Nor did his enemies, by charging him with manœuvring and management, diminish his reputation as a political partizan<sup>25</sup>.

after it had been refitted by his exertions. His fame as a poet stands very low; but it is his principal misfortune, that the subject of almost all his pieces is disastrous to genius; being unqualified panegyric, and sometimes devoted to not very deserving characters. His verses are smooth and polished, and display no inconsiderable command of poetical diction.

<sup>25</sup> *Hampton Court, October 22.* This day the following Address to his Majesty was presented to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, by the Vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge, attended by several of



On returning from their mission, Waterland and Bentley found the Tory party at Cambridge inflamed with resentment, of which the latter was the principal object: they were provoked at being so completely out-manœuvred; they were galled at the imputation of disloyalty, and perhaps equally so at the assertion of the weakness of their numbers. Speaking of their behaviour, in a letter to Dr. Clarke, he says: “ The

Anger directed  
against  
Bentley.

the Heads of Houses and Members of the said University, introduced by the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Townshend, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State.

“ The Humble Address of the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University of Cambridge :

“ Most Gracious Sovereign,

“ As we once had the peculiar honour to attend your Majesty with our thanks for a most eminent instance of your Royal favour and beneficence ; so we had been among the earliest messengers of the common joy and congratulation for your victory over rebels, had not our intention been frustrated by an unforeseen and unexampled impediment, which being removed, we take the first opportunity to show to your Majesty and the world, that it was not the want of our duty or affection, but our misfortune and calamity.

“ This we hope will excuse and justify our impatience, that we wait not for your Majesty's return to Great Britain, but hasten to address you, even while absent. And indeed we can scarce esteem it absence, while you only cross your own seas to visit your own hereditary countries ; while we see the influence of your mind and counsels pervade and animate all your dominions at once ; while you still seem to reside among us, in that lively image of your person and virtues, as well as of your sovereign power, his Royal Highness, your son.

“ 'Tis with diffidence that we now mention to you a rebellion so speedily suppressed, subdued, and extinguished, and which your princely magnanimity and clemency seems already to have forgot. But our own concerns, our late fears, and present joys oblige us to remark, that as no rebellion, in all our annals, appeared in its designs and consequences more terrible and destructive, so none ever went off and vanished in shorter time, with less detriment, and more propitious event ; serving only to display your Majesty's superior wisdom and fortitude, the weakness and rashness of your infatuated enemies, the firmness of your Ministry, and the faithfulness of your people. For even the few wicked actors, and just sufferers in it, that were not professed Papists, have done the justice to the Church Established, to declare they first deserted her communion, before they could imbibe the principles of treason and rebellion.

“ In an age of such distraction, such unaccountable folly as may seem rather imputable to the anger of Heaven than to the passions and interests



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fury of the whole disaffected and Jacobite party here against me and Mr. Waterland, is inexpressible; one would think that the late Address had given them a mortal blow, by the desperate rage they are in." The feelings of the party themselves are told in a letter from Conyers Middleton to the Earl of Oxford, then a prisoner in the Tower under the charge of high-treason, explaining the conduct of those friends of the disgraced Minister, who had opposed the Address. This, he assures him, resulted from no disaffection to the King and the Hanover Succession, but from a belief that it was uncalled for till his Majesty's return, and that the measure was only intended to 'procure preferment for Waterland, and impunity for Bentley<sup>26</sup>.' It appears also, that the Heads were offended at the Address not having been submitted to them, according to custom, before it was offered to the Senate. This omission was probably defended on the ground of their having already approved a

of men, your University dare not answer for every individual. But in the whole, we crave leave to assure your Majesty of our heartiest endeavours, both by precept and example, to instill into our youth the warmest sentiments of loyalty and allegiance, of veneration and gratitude to your Royal Person and Family; to inculcate to them, that whatever is dear to the good, or valuable to the wise, our religion and literature, our possessions and liberties, do principally subsist (under God) upon the present happy Establishment.

"May the same good Providence that has hitherto protected and guarded you, and has bound up the fate of the whole Reformation with the fortune of your illustrious House, bring your Majesty back to us in peace and safety, with increase of your health, and new acquests to your glory; and (if we may aspire to so high a wish) accompanied with your beloved grandson, that third security and pledge of Great Britain's felicity."

This Address is in the London Gazette, and other publications of the day. It is omitted in the University Register, either from the negligence of Mr. Grove the Registrary, or from some scruple about the variations in the copy given to him from that which had been actually read and voted in the Senate.

<sup>26</sup> This letter, without a name, but in the hand-writing of Middleton, is preserved in the Harleian collection.



similar one in the preceding April ; but the truth was, that secrecy was indispensable, or the stratagem for its passing the *Caput* would have miscarried. The first proof of ill-humour showed itself in a refusal to pay the expenses of those who had carried up the Address to the Throne : it was discovered that some alterations (probably of an unimportant nature) had been made by the Vice-chancellor, or the Master of Trinity ; and thereupon it was contended that the Address, not being the same as that voted by the Senate, had no claim upon the academical purse<sup>27</sup>.

In the midst of this ferment the Vice-chancellor's year of office terminated. The person who ought, according to the usual cycle, to have succeeded, was Dr. Bradford, the Master of Corpus Christi College, a theological author of reputation, who became ere long a member of the episcopal bench. He was believed to be on terms of close friendship with Dr. Bentley. At the nomination he and Mr. Grigg, Master of Clare Hall, being proposed, Dr. Lany, Master of Pembroke Hall, one of the Tory party, unexpectedly added to their names that of the Master of Trinity ; and the majority of the Heads immediately nominated Bentley and Grigg as the two persons of

Election of  
Vice-chancellor.

Nov. 3.  
Bentley nominated.

<sup>27</sup> Dr. Kennet, the Dean of Peterborough, in a letter of Nov. 24, 1716, preserved in the Bodleian Library, says :

“ The University of Cambridge are in a great ferment upon their late Address. The *Caput*, as they call them, complain much of a breach of their privilege, that it was not laid before them preparatory to its being laid before the Senate. But when the Vice-chancellor and Dr. Bentley came back to demand the usual expenses of the journey, it was denied in the Senate ; and a reason given by Mr. King, that it was not the same Address which had passed the University seal, but that the said bearers of it had altered it on the road : a fact which, it seems, could not be denied ; for Dr. B., with consent of the Vice-chancellor, had, as upon second thoughts, expunged some passages, and amended others.”

The Dean here falls into the common mistake of confounding the *Caput Senatus* with the Heads of Colleges.



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whom one was to be chosen Vice-chancellor by the Senate. This, Bentley says, 'was designed as a slur on him;' a notion which could hardly be correct; for when it was resolved to set aside Dr. Bradford, the Master of Trinity came regularly on the cycle for nomination, being the senior of those who had not *twice* filled the office. But an example being now set for breaking through the routine, it occurred to Bentley and his friends that an opportunity was opened for electing him chief magistrate. What followed shall be told in his own words: "The news being received by my friends with a great deal of mirth, and *the blind horse's* health (the nick-name of Dr. Lany) passing at dinner through all our Vice-master's table in the College-hall, it alarmed and scared the party so much, that they first broke the statute by calling a Congregation on the third, not for the fourth day, Sunday, as usual, but for the fifth<sup>28</sup>; and sent messengers for all their outliers, within twenty miles of Cambridge, to come at the election. The humour was well carried on by my friends to keep the fright up; and the enemy knew nothing but they were in earnest, till they were in the Schools; when above fifty friends appeared, and laughing at the others' fears and new faces, went out of the Schools, as I had privately desired them, without voting at all. Thus ended the farce and the fantom of their own raising;

<sup>28</sup> Atwood's account in his Diary coincides with this statement. "The congregation was deferred to the fifth, (having always been on the fourth, as far as any one now remembers) by the Proctors, in consideration of the persons who had cures (the fourth being Sunday) to defeat the intrigues of Dr. Bentley." It does not appear, however, to have been suspected that the breach of statute, thus committed by the postponement of the election of the chief magistrate beyond the prescribed day, was liable to the serious consequences which lawyers, I believe, denounce; namely, the vitiating the election, as well as every act done under the presidency of a person so chosen, or under any authority emanating from him.



which they now boast of abroad as a legitimate victory, and as a just revenge for making and managing the late address."

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'The farce,' however, did not end here; for 'the party' having come prepared for contest, resolved to have a poll, though there was no opposition: accordingly two votes being given for Dr. Bentley, one hundred and six voted for Mr. Grigg. This fact, which he omits, was the real 'slur' designed for him. He soon afterwards wrote the letter just mentioned to his friend Dr. S. Clarke, a divine much acquainted with the great, and, above all, honoured by the special regard of the Princess of Wales, who had already begun to obtain considerable influence. He represents the state of University affairs, and the necessity for Government openly countenancing those who had incurred so much odium and resentment by embarking in their cause. "If," says he, "the proposal *In usum Principis Frederici* goes on, and is finished on the King's return, and either a prebend or a living in the King's patronage is given to Mr. Waterland, I dare undertake that the Court shall hear no more of the Jacobite party here. On the contrary, as all eyes are now open here, and gaze with expectation, if Mr. Waterland and I are neglected above, and exposed here below to the malice of an enraged mob of malcontents, no person henceforth in this place can or will stir one foot to bear up against the stream. Even now had Miller been turned out, and the Royal answer given to the College, I could, had I pleased, have made myself Vice-chancellor in spite of all their posse. But at present several neuters are in uncertainty, apprehensive that we act without commission, reproached as beggars of preferment, but our performances slighted."

Nov. 5.

Nov. 18.

The Government at this time felt considerable

Non-juring  
Clergy.



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uneasiness at the supposed disaffection of a portion of the parochial clergy, a valuable and exemplary body of men, who naturally possess much influence over their flocks. Many of them, although peaceable in their demeanour, declined to take the Oaths to the new establishment: an opinion was prevalent with some, that the permanent tranquillity of the kingdom could only be secured by the restoration of the lineal heir: many clung to the vain idea, that the Pretender might be restored with such conditions and securities as would ensure the preservation of the Constitution in Church and State during his lifetime, and that his posterity might be educated in the established religion. These delusive notions, as well as certain favourable reports of the exiled prince, were propagated by the writings of the celebrated Mr. Leslie. It must be confessed, that a belief of the King's predilection for his German dominions, and indifference to his new throne, the conduct of the Hanoverian favourites and mistresses, the proscription under which the majority of the landed gentry were placed, and the triumphant language held by the dissenters, were circumstances ill calculated to conciliate the clergy. Nevertheless, as they were unquestionably ready, like their predecessors in 1688, to encounter any dangers rather than give admission to the religion of the Pretender, it was plain that their want of regard for the Protestant Succession was the mere effect of delusion. To remove this cloud from the eyes of his brethren was now attempted, with his characteristic decision, by Dr. Bentley.

Dr. Hickes.

Dr. George Hickes, the deprived dean of Worcester, who was regarded as the head of the Non-juring clergy, being lately dead, the publication of his papers revealed the intentions of his party respecting



the Church, whenever the Stuart line should be restored. They held, that all the conforming clergy were schismatic; and pronounced the invalidity of orders conferred by the Bishops made by usurping monarchs; consequently all baptisms performed by those schismatic divines were deemed to be illegal; and it was resolved that neither one nor the other should be acknowledged, until the parties had received fresh ordination or fresh baptism from the hands of their own part of the Church, which had never bowed the knee to Baal. The tendency of these purposes was obvious, and it was important that they should be generally known. On this ground Dr. Bentley, as Archdeacon of Ely, summoned the clergy of that diocese, among whom were believed to be many Jacobites, to a Visitation in the unusual and inconvenient month of December<sup>29</sup>.

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In his Charge he urged upon his brethren the duty of giving support at this time to the Protestant establishment, exposing the delusiveness of the views with which some friends of the Church fancied that she could enjoy security under a Popish monarch.

Bentley's  
Charge to  
his Arch-  
deaconry.  
Dec. 11.

<sup>29</sup> The Visitation Sermon on the first day (Dec. 11) was preached by Mr. John Heylin; and on the second day (Dec. 13) by Mr. Arthur Ashley Sykes, the zealous champion of the Low Church, who held the living of Dry Drayton, near Cambridge. The last discourse was on a similar topic with his friend Bishop Hoadly's celebrated sermon preached shortly afterwards, which gave birth to the Bangorian Controversy. It was printed, and an analysis of it may be seen in Disney's Life of Sykes, p. 42. Being intended as an attack upon Church Government, it was of course agreeable to the ruling party. As a sample of the reception it experienced from the opposite side, I will cite the following extract from the Journal of Mr. Rud, who was then curate of St. Michael's, the parish church in which it was preached:

"Dec. 11, 1716. Dr. B. the Archdeacon held his Visitation; and Mr. Heylin, late of our College, preached a very fine sermon."

"Dec. 13. Mr. Sykes, late of Bene't, preached such a scandalous sermon with relation to the Church and the Clergy, as perhaps the like was never heard before in any place, much less at a Visitation."



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Availing himself of the discovery made from Hickes's papers, he showed how absolutely the preferments, and even the spiritual character of the majority of them would, in case of the restoration of the Stuarts, be placed at the mercy of people in power, or their rapacious partizans. These and other arguments are pressed with his usual clearness of reasoning and strength of expression; and being addressed to persons who had embraced their opinions with sincerity, they were more calculated to produce a good effect than the harangues and writings then in fashion, which loaded the Non-juring party with every villainous imputation.

This Charge, the only one of his writings that can be termed political, being printed in different periodical publications, procured for the Archdeacon high reputation and great applause from the friends of Government<sup>30</sup>. Oldmixon, the Whig historian, after giving a long extract from it upon the subject of lay-baptism, extols Bentley to the skies, and attributes the opposition in his College, as well as the 'Humble and Serious Representation,' to the malice of a political party<sup>31</sup>. On the other hand it raised extreme indignation among the partizans of the Pretender; if we may judge from the language of a very devoted one, Thomas Hearne, the antiquary, who abuses the production in unmeasured terms, and declares that 'it shows Dr. Bentley to be (as he certainly is) a rascal, and an enemy to *the King* and all *the King's* friends<sup>32</sup>.'

<sup>30</sup> See *The Political State*, for December 1716, vol. xii. p. 628.

<sup>31</sup> Oldmixon's *History of the Stuarts*, vol. ii. p. 629.

<sup>32</sup> Hearne's *Diary* in the Bodleian Library, Jan. 11, 1716-17.

END OF VOL. I.

GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS, ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

Bayerische  
Staatsbibliothek  
München







Availing himself of the discovery made from Baker's papers, he showed how absolutely the professedly religious and even the spiritual character of the majority of them would, in case of the restoration of the Stuarts, be placed at the mercy of people in power, or their capacious partisans. These and other arguments are presented with his usual clearness of reasoning and strength of expression; and being addressed to persons who had embraced their opinions with sincerity, they were more calculated to produce a good effect than the harangues and writings then in fashion, which loaded the Non-juring party with every odious imputation.

This Charge, the only one of his writings that can be termed political, being printed in different periodical publications, procured for the Archdeacon high reputation and great applause from the friends of Government<sup>20</sup>. Oldmixon, the Whig historian, after giving a long extract from it upon the subject of lay-baptism, exalts Bentley to the skies, and attributes the opposition in his College, as well as the 'Honourable and Serious Representation,' to the malice of a political party<sup>21</sup>. On the other hand it raised extreme indignation among the partizans of the Pretender; it was very judiciously judged of a very devoted one, Thomas Hearne, the antiquary, who abuses the production in unmeasured terms, and declares that 'it shows Dr. Bentley to be (as he certainly is) a rascal, and an enemy to the King and all the King's friends'<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> See *The Political State*, for December 1715, vol. iii. p. 17.

<sup>21</sup> *Oldmixon's History of the Stuarts*, vol. ii. p. 329.

<sup>22</sup> *Hearne's Diary in the Bodleian Library*, Jan. 11, 1716-17.



























Monk, James Henry

The life of Richard Bentley D. D. Master of Trinity College and Regius  
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